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BABY-WAIF.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

When the balmy April hours
Dawned thro' gusts of silver rain,
And the Spring's evangel flowers
Glorified the earth again;
When the twitter of the swallow
Rippled round the mossy eaves,
And the sunshine, slant and mellow,
Shot between the odorous leaves;
Pretty waif, with summery name,
To our home a baby came!

Flashed together leaf and blossom,
In the tremulous morning dew,
But the bud on mother's bosom
Was the sweetest ever grew!
Pale she glowed, as snow-wreath chilly,
Sunbright hair and violet eyes,
Oh, she was a fragile lily
From the vales of Paradise;
Some young angel's listless hand
Dropped into our twilight land!

While the merry, merry May bee
Swung in breezy bud and flower,
In our home the sinless baby
Grew in beauty every hour;
Till one twilight, wild and chilly,
Fell a shadow from the skies,
And our angel-gathered lily
Bloomed once more in Paradise,
Coming back to us no more
From the far immortal shore.

When the buds in April's bosom
Dawned once more in sun and rain,
In the garden slept our blossom
That will never wake again!
And our love hath set a token
In that valley-garden lone;
Budding heart's-ease and a broken
Lily, carved upon a stone,
Where with mournfully shut eyes
Baby-waif, our darling, lies!

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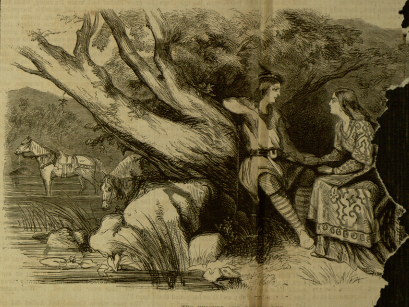

THE RESCUED AND THE RESCUER.

THE FORTUNES OF CONRAD.

A ROMANCE OF ANCIENT BRITTANY.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

CHAPTER IV.

A CHANGE OF GUARD.

Baptiste, be it remembered, was a large, strong man, and an experienced warrior. By the side of his gigantic leader he did not show to so good advantage; but he was taller than Conrad, and much heavier; and he flourished his sword with the air of one supremely confident of his own prowess.

"Poor boy!" he said, advancing his right foot, and twirling his sword to a favorite guard, "you have brought this upon yourself."

"I ask no pity," replied our hero, glad of an opportunity to speak,—for it gave relief to his breathing. "If you have work to do, set about it at once."

"I thank you for the hint," returned Baptiste. "I will finish my work, and then go to my dinner. Take your own method of defence."

The man-at-arms swept his point to the right, and to the left, and then made a direct and furious thrust, evidently intending therewith to finish the play; but his mark was not reached. The point of his antagonist had kept even pace with his own, and when he made the thrust his blade only glided harmlessly under the mountaineer's arm.

Baptiste recovered himself quickly, and commenced a new attack—a thrust—a sweep to the right—to the left—then back to the right—a feint at the neck—with a final push at the breast; and yet his point only cleaved the open air. He recovered himself, and stepped back.

"Your old hermit must be a marvellous teacher," he said.

"He has been a kind and attentive one, at all events," replied Conrad.

"If I ever see him again, I'll tell him how well his pupil bore himself. Come—we will play no more."

The swords crossed again, with a clang that spoke of sharp work. The man-at-arms had found his opponent better than he had expected, and he concluded not to expend more time in fancy fencing. It was now a cut, and a thrust—a step backward—a step forward—a feint—a lunge;—and yet the young guide was not touched. Now Baptiste shut his teeth, and commenced a new movement. Presently he caught Conrad's blade with a twisting movement of his own, as though he would wrench it from its owner's grasp; but such was not his intention, as the youth could detect by his eye. The aim of this was, to cause Conrad to clutch his hilt so nervously as to paralyze, for the instant, the nerve of the wrist; and, during that instant, to slip his blade away and push it home into the body of his antagonist. The mountaineer, however, had been thoroughly trained in all those movements, and when he felt the sword of his adversary thus winding about his own, he simply leaped backward without breaking his guard; and at the same instant Baptiste, from the impetus already given, took a step forward. As he did so Conrad struck a smart blow upon his upper guard, causing him to clutch his hilt for fear of losing it. The man-at-arms felt his error, and tried to leap from it; but he was not quick enough. Ere he could disengage his sword from the circle of his opponent his point was thrown vigorously aside, and on the next moment the blade of the fore-doomed guide had found his heart.

Conrad stepped back, and rested his reeking point upon the greensward.

"I am a dead man!" gasped Baptiste, sinking to the earth, with both hands pressed upon his gushing bosom.

"It is your own work," answered Conrad.

"O—you lied to me! I am the best swordsman in——"

His speech failed him, and he fell back dead; and very quickly afterwards Goliath reached the spot, and leaped from his saddle.

"Dog! What have you done?" cried the giant, drawing his sword.

"You see what I have done," replied Conrad, drawing back a pace.

"Aye,—you have, by some foul chance of trick, sent Baptiste to the world of spirits; and I'll send thee right quickly to join him."

Conrad had been taught that mere brute strength could not make a swordsman. The possession of physical power was a necessity; but it needed to be coupled with elasticity of muscle; quickness and steadiness of nerve; delicacy of touch; litheness of limb; instantaneous perception of sight; and perfect coolness of head. Even the different members need to borrow, for the time, each other's qualities. The eye must feel before it can see, and the fingers must "see and think." All these things our hero understood; and his passage with Baptiste had served to assure him that he had not forgotten the lessons of his tutor. He had found his late antagonist an expert swordsman, and yet he had not been called upon to exert his utmost skill. Two of the most subtle attacks which Francisco had taught him he had not used at all.

Goliath did not wait for extended preliminaries. He came as an avenger, and at once set about the work. He swept his heavy sword about in a circle, and then aimed a slashing blow at the youth's neck. Conrad simply leaped aside from the stroke, and as he did so he wounded Goliath in the left arm.

"'Sblood!" cried the giant, his eyes flashing fury, "you are venomous."

He would have spoken further, but at that moment he found his sword in a perplexing situation. His youthful adversary had caught it by a twisting lock, and he was forced to lower his hand to keep the grasp of his hilt.

"I have you now!" he muttered. His eye had caught the position of the two blades—each point under the other's guard—and he knew that, if he was quick enough, the strongest wrist would win the chance. As he spoke he lowered his elbow, and sought to raise his hand; but, to his astonishment, he found that he could not do it. His sword was held as though by a vice; and now he sought to do what he might have done before—to withdraw his blade; but he had lost too much time. The discovery that the youth's wrist was stronger than his own seemed for the moment to paralyze him, and before he could so far recover from his astoundment as to draw back his arm, his weapon was borne down till his wrist fairly cracked. Conrad saw the painful clutching of those huge fingers, and he knew that the hand must be weak. With a quick movement he disengaged his sword, raised the point to the giant's heart, and lunged forward with all his might.

Goliath saw the fatal blow even before it was fairly aimed, and he tried to ward it off with his left hand; but his fate was sealed, and his huge carcass soon lay close by that of his fallen companion.

Adolphe saw his leader fall; and his sword, which had been half drawn from its scabbard, was pushed back again. His first thought had apparently been of assisting Goliath; but he hesitated alone to attack the man who had displayed such wonderful prowess; so he remained by the side of the lady whom he had been left to guard, leaving it for the guide to approach him when he thought proper; and he did not have long to wait.

"Now, Master Adolphe," cried Conrad, coming towards him, with his sword still drawn, "what demand have you to make?"

Adolphe hesitated. He surveyed the young mountaineer from head to foot; he saw the reeking blade still held with a firm, confident grasp; and he met the flashing of an eye whose light was like a sunbeam. At length he replied:

"It is for you to demand of me. You have overcome the two men who were my superiors, and I shall not contend against you. You have deceived us well."

"How have I deceived you?"

"You professed that you knew nothing of the sword."

"Easy, sir. I professed no such thing. What I told you was the truth. I said that I had only used the sword in play with old Francisco; and such was the fact. But know that Francisco is an old soldier, and that he has been one of the best swordsmen in Brittany. But you do well to talk of deception! How [illegible] By heaven, sir, you will not [illegible] me of th[illegible] I have a most serious charge to lay upon thy shoulders. You led me upon a base errand and sought to make me a tool for the consummation of a most foul conspiracy. You professed to be a poor pilgrim seeking a passage to the monastery of St. George; whereas you were a soldier and an adventurer, engaged in a cruel work."

"How can you make that out?" asked Adolphe, trembling.

"Ask the lady by your side. She can tell you. Aye—and she shall tell you. And now I make my first demand. The lady shall choose with which of us she will go. If she chooses to go with you, I will depart in peace and leave you with your charge. If she prefers to go with me she shall do so. What say you?"

The man-at-arms seemed at loss for a reply. He gazed from the lady to the guide, and then from the guide to the lady.

"Hark ye, master Adolphe," said the youth, taking a step forward and raising the point of his sword from the ground; "If you mean to offer resistance, let me know it quickly. Come down from your horse. Down, I say."

The soldier slipped from his saddle, remarking as he did so:

"I am not thinking of resistance; I am thinking how I shall answer my master if I freely and voluntarily give up the lady."

"You need not give her up voluntarily. Let her make her own decision. If she decides to go with you, you will not give her up at all. If she decides that she will go with me, I will sustain her decision with my sword."

"No, no," quickly replied the man-at-arms; "I have no desire to put you to that trouble. And, as far as the lady is concerned, I can already imagine what her answer will be."

"Let us have her answer at once," said Conrad. He advanced to her side as he spoke, and would have asked her the question; but she anticipated him. She glided from her saddle, and sank upon her knees before him.

"O, noble sir, take me to thy protection and save me from the hands of this soldier! Do it, and Heaven will bless thee!"

The veil had floated away from her face, and her features were exposed. Conrad was for the moment entranced. He had never even dreamed of such beauty as he thus beheld. She was not more than eighteen years of age; of slight, sylph-like form; and possessing every charm necessary to a picture of angelic loveliness.

"By Saint Michael!" muttered Adolphe, as he beheld the two regarding each other; "here is a pretty piece of mischief. If our young mountaineer thinks the damsel is beautiful, what must she think of him? By my faith she hath never beheld so fair a youth before. If this does not prove to be the commencement of trouble, then I will never prophesy again."

In the meantime, Conrad extended his hand to the maiden and lifted her to her feet.

"I am your servant," he said, "and you may command me. Whithersoever thou wishest to go, thither will I conduct thee."

"Take me to my home, brave, noble sir. O, conduct me in safety to my father's arms, and all blessing shall be thine."

"Adolphe," said the youth, turning to the man-at-arms, "you have heard the lady's request—what say you?"

The fellow had been busy with his own thoughts, and when he was thus addressed, he started and gazed into the face of his interlocutor without speaking.

"Answer me," continued Conrad. "Will you dare to interpose against the wishes of the lady?"

Adolphe laid his finger upon Conrad's arm, and drew him a few steps away, where his low tones could not reach the ear of the maiden.

"Young sir," he said, with seeming honesty, "let me speak to you soberly and earnestly. I have no disposition

for I have seen en

are my superior;

give you a w

me, a poor

ing against the [illegible]ests of the most powerful man in the kingdom."

"Ha," cried Conrad. "Has the King——"

"Not the king," interrupted Adolphe.

"And who is more powerful than the king?"

"The prince is more powerful. The king is old and broken; while the prince is in the full flush of youth and vigor. The prince is really ruler in Brittany."

"I have heard that Theobald was growing weak; but I thought him still king of Brittany."

"So he is, in name; but prince Bertrand wields the power, nevertheless."

"Well—and suppose all this is so—what then?"

"For your own safety," said Adolphe, "I will tell you that which, perhaps, I ought not to tell. We three men-at-arms were sent by the prince to conduct this lady to the Castle of Saint Cyr. Bertrand will not be likely to look very favorably upon the man who thwarts him. His enmity is fatal, sir."

"What more have you to say?" asked Conrad.

"I have said all, sir. If you pursue the course you have decided to adopt, you will bring down upon yourself the sure vengeance of the prince."

"I thank you for the information you have given me, Master Adolphe; but I cannot allow it to alter my determination. I shall take the lady under my charge, and conduct her to her home."

"Do you dream where her home is?"

"I have not the least idea."

"Has she told you her name?"

"No."

"Then you know not with whom you have to deal. Allow me to inform you, Sir Mountaineer, that you are mixing yourself up in a dangerous matter. The lady is the daughter of Casimir, Duke of Rennes; and perhaps you are aware that he stands next in power to the prince."

"So much the more need is there that the honor of his daughter should be protected."

"But what if he were a party to this removal of the lady?"

"Then he is a most unnatural father; and I will espouse the cause of his daughter against his tyranny."

Adolphe shrugged his shoulders.

"Go your way, sir. And, in the meantime, I hope you will allow me to go mine."

"You are at liberty to go where you please."

"First," said Adolphe, "I would pay some little attention to the remains of my fallen companions. We cannot very well dig graves for them; but if you will assist me to lift the bodies to the backs of their horses, I will carry them to the old castle, where I may find vaults in which they can be properly deposited."

Conrad saw nothing objectionable in this arrangement; so he went and helped the man-at-arms as he had requested. It was a difficult matter to lift the body of the giant; but the feat was accomplished; and when the two corses had been secured upon the backs of the horses, Adolphe mounted his own beast, and set out for the castle upon his ghostly errand.

When he was gone, Conrad returned to the lady. The look of terror had gone from her face, and the youth felt his heart bound with new and strange emotion as he now gazed upon her. She was very beautiful; and there was a softness and depth in the tone of her loveliness that appealed directly to the soul. There was no haughtiness in her manner, no sharpness in the angles of her face; but all was pure and good; and the music of her voice sweetly harmonized with the soft, mild light of her eye, and the entrancing smile of her lip.

"Dear lady," said our hero, "I am told that you are the daughter of the Duke of Rennes."

"Yes, sir; and my name is Rosaline," she replied, with confiding frankness. "And," she

rested during the night, and o

morning Baptiste and Adolphe

a guide. You came back wit

liath again threatened me with

to you. O, when I saw your fa

how kind, and true, and noble yo

believed you would help me if you could;

dared not speak. The rest you know. Y

will conduct me back to my father; and your reward——"

"Will be already ample when I have performed my duty," finished Conrad, taking the small white hand which she had extended towards him. He held it but a moment; and then turned away to look after the man-at-arms; for, since he had heard the lady's story, he had conceived a great desire to speak with the fellow once more.

"Rest a while," he said, speaking to Rosaline, after the soldier had disappeared beyond the outer walls of the castle with his ghostly load. "There are one or two questions which I would like to ask of Master Adolphe before I lose sight of him for good. I fancy he will not remain long in the old ruin."

CHAPTER V.

THE ROAD TO RENNES.

Conrad spoke truly when he said that he wished to speak with Master Adolphe; and yet he did not tell the whole truth. If he had simply wished to see the man-at-arms, there would have been no need of hurry; but, the fact was, he wished to hide his face from the lady Rosaline. He was under the influence of a spell which he could not break while her eyes beamed upon him. He was being mysteriously entranced—charmed by a magic power.

"O, my soul!" he murmured to himself, when he had turned away, "this opens to me a new sense of life; it strikes upon unused cords in my bosom. But this entrance to heaven is not for me. Be still, my beating heart. Let me do my duty. I must return the maiden to her father, and then I must forget her."

While Rosaline ate her dinner, the youth watched for the return of Adolphe; but no Adolphe came. At the end of an hour he concluded to go to the castle and seek the soldier; but as he was about to speak with the lady upon the subject he saw a peasant coming towards him from the ruin, with an axe upon his shoulder, and a rope in his hand. He was evidently going into the wood after faggots. Conrad hailed him, and the man came up without hesitation. He was an honest-looking fellow, and gazed with a curious surprise upon the mountaineer and his lovely companion.

"My good man," said Conrad, "I think you came from yonder old ruin."

"Yes, sir," replied the peasant; "but I don't live there. My home is more than a league beyond."

"Did you see a stranger at the castle?"

"Yes, sir."

"What was he doing?"

"He was coming up out from the vaults when I first saw him."

"Do you know what he had been doing?"

"No, sir. He didn't look like a man who would answer impertinent questions; so we didn't ask any."

"You say *we*. Had you a companion?"

"Yes; I had two."

"Where are they now?"

"They have gone with the stranger. He had two extra horses, and they rode away with him, leaving me to work alone."

"Do you know whither they have gone?"

"Yes, sir; to the capital of Brittany."

"Ah, they have taken another road?"

"Yes. They will strike the Ille north of these hills, and then keep down the valley."

"Very well," said Conrad, putting his hand into his pocket, and taking out a silver crown; "I shall have the pleasure of returning alone. Here, my good man, take this for your trouble."

The peasant took the crown with sparkling eyes.

"Did the stranger seem to be in much of a hurry?" asked our hero, carelessly.

"O, yes, sir. He wanted my brothers to ride with all their might. It seemed as though his life depended upon his speed."

Conrad thanked the peasant once more, and then allowed him to depart.

"Lady," he said, after a little reflection, "would you prefer to go to Vannes, where you left your father, or to your home in Rennes?"

"Why do you ask, sir? You have heard something from that peasant. There is some new danger."

"No, lady. Danger ceases to be danger w [illegible] we can avoid it. But I will tell you what [illegible] learned from the peasant. Master Ado [illegible] found new guides, and has set off for [illegible] with all possible speed. As he is in [illegible] of the prince, he will com [illegible] here he can find them; [illegible] es not fail him, it [illegible] h Vannes [illegible]

[illegible] and where my youthful mind [illegible] the old hermit who has been my [illegible] sco is the hermit's name; and [illegible] with my father. He has taught [illegible] trust that I have not been an idle [illegible] My lessons have been such as my good [illegible] her could safely expound, and to him I owe [illegible] ore than I can ever repay. He taught me Spanish; and my knowledge of that language served me in learning the intentions of our enemies."

"But you have served in the army, sir?"

"No."

"You have had much experience with the sword?"

"Only what I have had in exercise with old Francisco. Until this day I never drew my sword in mortal combat."

"It is wonderful."

"Not very," said Conrad, with a smile. "Francisco is a most accomplished swordsman; and I have been a most eager pupil. And then you must remember that I had all the advantage of incitement. I had something of Right upon my side—something of sacred, holy duty. You were to me the embodiment of a great principle; and I am proud that my first battle had so noble a cause."

The lady Rosaline gazed up into Conrad's face, and the language of her look was grateful and tender. A close observer—one skilled in reading the signs of the human face—could easily have divined the feeling that moved the soul of the maiden. The romance of the youth's mountain-life—his orphanage—his strange tutor—his free and simple manners—all had a charm for her, a charm far deeper than could have been given by a story of noble birth and grand family advantages. With true womanly instinct, she prized the daring qualities of the hero because their first effort had been made in her behalf. And, further than this, it might have been seen that the youth's calm, fresh beauty made a deep impression upon her. She could not hide the signs that told the story of opening love. Her heart bounded and fluttered with its own impulses; and all she could do was, to dwell in the light of those tenderly-beaming eyes, and listen to the deep music of the manly voice.

There is a language not written, and there are words not spoken. There is a sense more subtle than sight; and a conviction more sure than speech. There is a language of sympathy; a mystic bond between two congenial souls; an electric flow of sense and perception from spirit to spirit; whispering of love and faith, which the ears do not hear, and which the eyes do not read. It is a sense which reveals to us that the spirit is not always dependent upon the body for its sources of information—a sense catching its perceptions from the Spirit itself, and communicating with a kindred spirit without the use of outward sign.

Strange feelings came upon Conrad's heart.

An echo was in the heart of Rosaline.

Their hands met, and the thrill was electric. From soul to soul—from heart to heart. What was the language? not of earth, but of heaven.

Conrad was the strongest, and he was the first to break from the ecstatic trance.

"Our horses have rested enough," he said. "We had better be on our way."

Rosaline started as though she had awakened from a dream. She had meant to speak some words of gratitude in answer to her companion's remark touching the battle; but her tongue was slow, and the words were not spoken. She allowed her companion to assist her again to her saddle, and they were soon speeding along through the dark wood.

In half an hour they struck the right bank of a branch of the river Ille, and from this point the road to Rennes was plain and direct, following a smooth valley the whole distance. But as the road became better the darkness of night came on, and the maiden rode closer to her guide and held her rein more tightly.

"How far is it now to Rennes?" she asked.

"Not more than eight leagues. At an easy pace we can accomplish the distance in four hours; and that will bring us to the end of our journey very shortly after midnight. If your horse can stand the trial we shall be all right."

"My horse has a light load," replied Rosaline; "and, moreover, he is strong and enduring. But I am not in such a hurry as to put the poor beast to any unwonted exertion. I do not think there can be any danger on the road."

"Not at present," said Conrad. He reflected a moment, and then added: "As far as my own comfort is concerned, I could ride by your side across the continent without tiring; but it is not [illegible] possible that Master Adolphe may find some [illegible] on the road and think of turning his atten- [illegible] o you."

[illegible] t he has gone to Vannes."

[illegible] started for Vannes; but something may [illegible] ange his course. Have you any idea [illegible] e intended to follow you directly to [illegible] did."

[illegible] not impossible that he may be on [illegible] impossible that he may [illegible] h should be the case, they [illegible] prehend that you had gone [illegible]

[illegible] with apprehension.

[illegible] alarm you, dear lady; for [illegible] sion. I am well acquainted [illegible] wind about among these [illegible] way can Adolphe overtake [illegible] should happen that he had [illegible] rse laid down by the peasant [illegible] I have thought that he might [illegible] a thing."

[illegible] hould he do so?" inquired Rosa- [illegible] uld not hope to overcome you."

[illegible] but he may wish to meet the [illegible] ollowed us by the same [illegible] t Cyr, he would strike [illegible] n not more than two [illegible] Bertrand had planned [illegible] Adolphe, knowing [illegible] ted off on the north- [illegible] at least, to escape [illegible] rt on our return, [illegible] to follow, especially [illegible] master on the way. [illegible] occasion for fear; [illegible] we had better keep [illegible]

[illegible] ered the maiden. "We [illegible] ow under our feet."

[illegible] pon the bank of the river, [illegible] ime the bosom of the mur- [illegible] in sight, reflecting, in dim [illegible] nes, the bright stars that [illegible] the cloudless sky. Conrad [illegible] sy; and yet, as the new feel- [illegible] and stronger within him, [illegible] ore precious in his sight, [illegible] y began to take form [illegible] ought more upon the [illegible] sation, the idea that [illegible] prince in the wood and [illegible] ard Rennes, became [illegible]. He reasoned thus

[illegible] seen upon the road [illegible] nor would he allow [illegible] of Saint Cyr without [illegible] hen he knew that [illegible] upon her, and were [illegible] frontier, he fol- [illegible] this very night. By my life the prince would not be long in seeking so lovely a prize!"

These thoughts caused him to put his horse into a faster pace, and for half an hour, over a level road, he rode on at a gallop. By and by they reached a point where the path turned away from the stream, winding up over a steep hill, and as the horses walked slowly up, side by side, Rosaline called her companion's attention to the scene. It was wild and romantic, and even Conrad forgot, for the while, the thoughts that had been busy within him. From the brow of the precipice they gazed down into the gloomy depth, where, far below them, made visible by the flashing reflection of the star-beams, rolled the narrow river, like some golden-scaled serpent, of huge proportions, winding its way through a sea of ink.

"O," murmured the maiden, "I should like to live among the mountains, as you do. I should like it better than the turmoil of the life that those lead who dwell in courts. Even in the darkest hours there is a calmness of grandeur that leads the soul up to Heaven, and fixes the mind upon holy thoughts. And then in the bright sunlight what joy and rapture to be free and happy, bound by no stern rules of fashion, and subject only to the laws of God and nature. How I would sing with the birds, and skip with the playful lambs. Would you wish to exchange your mountain home for a haunt in the city?"

"Not unless some duty called me," replied Conrad, hardly knowing what he spoke. "It has been said," he added, in a slightly tremulous tone, "that home is where the heart is; and where love aboundeth, there may the true heart be content. I have been very happy in my forest retreat during the years that are passed; but who shall say that that happiness can continue. The human heart is a wayward thing. My heart may fix its deepest, strongest love upon something that does not belong to the forest; and then my happiness among the mountains would be gone, for hope would be ever pointing another way."

"A stout heart may win the object of its love," said Rosaline, in a low tone.

"Not if that object be entirely beyond its reach," returned the youth, regretfully. "The child may fall in love with the evening star, but the bright object will always have to be loved at a distance."

"But," pursued the maiden, in a stronger tone, "the man of sense and judgment will not fall in love with that which is not possessed of a soul like his own. Love is not fixed to station or power. True love is like the blessed sunlight. It warms alike the hearts of the high and the low."

Conrad pressed his hand upon his bosom, and bowed his head. O, if he could have spoken all he felt, he could have told Rosaline of Rennes of one prize that would have made his forest home a paradise forever. But he dared not speak. And yet he dared to gaze upon the lovely being by his side, and feast his soul upon the newly born love.

At the foot of the hill they once more struck the river's bank, and the horses were put again into a gallop.

"How far now to Rennes?" asked Rosaline.

"A good six leagues. We have been only an hour on the road since there were eight leagues before us."

"We shall reach the castle by midnight."

"If no accident happens."

And Rosaline repeated, as an echo:

"*If no accident happens.*"

CHAPTER VI.

AN ACCIDENT, AND ITS RESULT.

A low, boggy place, where a sluggish brook emptied into the river, over which was a bridge of logs, old, rotten, and moss-covered. The light jennet, with the lady upon its back, trotted smoothly over; but the heavier beast of Conrad's stopped, with a loud snort, and tried to avoid the direct way.

"Over—over, my pet," cried the youth, patting the animal upon the neck. "It is but a bridge;—the footing is good. Come—over we go."

The horse snorted, and snuffed, and still refused to go. Conrad coaxed and patted; but to no avail.

"This will never do," he said, clenching the rein with a firm hand, and driving the spurs deep into the flanks of the refractory beast. "You must go over. Now—up! up!"

The will of the master, thus made manifest, was all powerful, and the horse started forward. A few steps were taken—a slip—a plunge—and down through the rotten fabric went a fore-foot. Before Conrad could dismount the horse had struggled to free himself, and the result was, that the log gave way, pitching him forward, and throwing his rider out from the saddle. Our hero picked himself quickly up, without having received a bruise worth noticing, and hastened to the assistance of his horse; but he was too late.

"Is the poor animal badly hurt?" asked Rosaline.

"I fear so, lady."

"Can I help you? If I can, let me know it, for I am not afraid of work, even though there be danger in it."

"Remain in your saddle, dear lady. You cannot help me here. Look the other way. Turn your eyes."——

"What have you done, Conrad?"

"I have done a work of mercy, lady Rosaline."

"But your sword is out. What is it?"

"Be not alarmed. It is a sad event, but it cannot be helped. O, a better blood now warms my blade than flowed from the veins of Goliath and Baptiste. I found both the forward legs of the noble beast broken, and with my own hand have I delivered him from his suffering."

At first Rosaline thought more of the melancholy accident to the horse than of the result to herself and companion; but when Conrad had joined her, and started up on foot by the side of her jennet, she remembered that the accident had a wider reach.

"Heavens!" she cried, "must you walk?"

"For the present I must; but I will walk fast. Our journey will not be so quickly performed as we had hoped; but if you reach your home in safety, we will not complain."

"But, good Conrad, can you not ride with me? I think my horse is——"

"Hush, lady. Your horse has work enough already. I am used to walking, and we will make better way than you think for."

"You may find a horse on the road," suggested Rosaline.

"Not until we reach Saint Mary; and that is four leagues distant. But do not let the mishap trouble you. I will walk by your side, and should any good fortune turn up for us, we will be ready to seize it."

If this mode of proceeding had its disadvantage, it also had its advantage, for the travellers could now converse without difficulty. Rosaline had studied much; and it so happened that the course which she had pursued under the guidance of her various tutors, was, in many points, like that which Conrad had pursued. Her mind was clear and comprehensive; her perceptions keen, and her judgment good; and as the conversation turned upon themes familiar to both, the discussion became animated and interesting. They talked of art, of war, of the rise and fall of nations, and of the language of Spain and England and Germany; and it was evident, as they proceeded, that Rosaline was surprised at the display of knowledge which marked her companion's speech. She listened to him attentively, and was, ere long, seeking information from him upon topics which her tutors had never explained.

Thus passed an hour, and Conrad was upon the point of asking some question touching the affairs of the royal court of Brittany, when his attention was arrested by a sudden movement of Rosaline's horse. The animal pricked up its ears, gave a quick, startled snuff, and seemed quite uneasy.

"He may see something in the wood," said Rosaline.

There were woods upon the left hand, while the river ran upon the right.

"He does not act as though he saw anything unusual," replied Conrad. "He either hears or smells something. Suppose we stop a moment and listen."

Rosaline drew in the rein, and Conrad bent his ear to the ground.

"I hear nothing," he said, after listening for a while. "It must have been some strange scent that touched the animal's sense. We will move on again."

In a little while the wood was left behind, and the path lay along at the foot of a high bluff that flanked the river on that side. The road was wide enough, and plain, for the stream was now low, and the banks were broad, and had a gradual, easy slope.

"We were speaking," said Conrad, "of the court of Theobald. I have heard much of the old king, and I think I like him. I think he is a good man."

"He is a good man," returned Rosaline, emphatically; "but he has been a most unfortunate man; and he is now a most unhappy man. The prince, his son, shows no love for him, and brings him often to grief."

"You speak of Bertrand?"

"Certainly. He is the only child the king ever had."

"He must be a monster!" said Conrad, smiting his hip with his clenched hand. "If he hath no love for his kind old father, he is most unnatural; and his treatment of thee proves him to be basely wicked. Alas! what must be the fate of Brittany when he ascends the throne, and takes the sceptre!"

"I dread to think," returned Rosaline, shuddering. "His first acts may be of vengeance!"

"Not upon thee, sweet lady! Not upon thee, if I have an arm to give thee succor."

"Ah," murmured the maiden, "when that time comes a home in the deep forest——"

Her speech was cut short by the movement of her horse, the old signs of uneasiness being repeated; and this time the snuffing was louder and more startling.

"I think my poor horse misses his mate" said Rosaline.

"It may be that; it may be something more," returned Conrad. "Stop a moment."

Again the lady drew in her rein; and once more the youth bent his ear to the ground. He listened a few moments and then started up.

"We are——"

"What?"

Conrad had commenced to speak in a tone of excitement, but he calmed himself, and added:

"I think some one is on the road behind us."

"What is it?"

"I hear the tramp of horses in full speed."

"Do you think we can be followed?"

Conrad was looking eagerly around, and seemed not to notice the question.

"Do not fear to tell me the truth, sir. O, I had rather know the worst at once, for then I may be preparing for the result."

"I did not hesitate because I feared to answer you, my lady; but I was looking to see if there was any place where we might turn away from the road."

"Then you think we may be pursued by our enemies?"

"The thing is possible, certainly. Master Adolphe may have turned about, and met the prince; and if they have come together, and have concluded to follow us, they would be very likely to hit upon the road to Rennes."

"Mercy!" gasped Rosaline.

"Keep up your heart, lady. All is not yet lost. In the first place, it may not be the prince, at all. Let us not fear too much. If I could find a cover, I would draw aside, and allow the approaching horsemen to pass; but I see no such opportunity here. Let us move on."

As we have before said, the road at this place lay between the river and a high bluff, and there was no possible way of turning out unless they crossed the stream. The face of the bluff was almost perpendicular, as though the water had cut its way through a long, high hill. Conrad turned to the river. It was dark and deep, and its current was swift.

"Can we not cross?" asked Rosaline.

"Not here," replied her companion. "The river has grown deeper, and the force of the tide is too strong."

They hurried on, but the prospect of escape did not brighten. The bluff upon the left seemed to grow higher and more frowning, while the river upon the right rushed on with increasing fury. The clatter of the coming horses could now be plainly heard, and it was evident that they were not a great way off. Conrad gazed around once more; but he could see no way of avoiding the pursuers. Had he been alone, with a powerful horse, he might have tried the stream; but he dared not venture the light-limbed jennet, with its precious burden, in such an ordeal.

Nearer and nearer came the pursuers, and finally the youth laid his hand upon the lady's rein.

"We had better stop here," he said. "We cannot avoid them."

"And what will you do?" asked Rosaline.

"I will remain between you and them, and ascertain what they want. They may not be enemies."

"But—if it should be the prince."

"Then I will ask him what he seeks."

"O! you will not oppose Prince Bertrand. It would be madness! It would be fatal! You must not expose yourself to certain death!"

"Dear lady, be under no apprehensions on my account. Leave all to me, and trust me for the result. If it be the prince, and he forces you from my protection, you will at least believe that I did all I could for you."

"Yes—yes; but do not run into new danger. If it be my fate——"

"Hush, lady. They are close at hand. Leave all to me. Do you remain where you are, and hope for the best."

Conrad strode back over the road, and at a short distance he met an advancing horseman.

"Hold!" he cried, in a tone that at once brought the horse to a standstill, nearly throwing his rider over his head. "Who comes here?"

The man whom Conrad had hailed did not answer; but another quickly rode up, who proved to be Master Adolphe.

"By Saint Michael!" cried the latter, catching a glimpse of the interloper by the dim starlight, "it is our mountaineer."

"What is all this?" asked a third horseman, riding up, and stopping by the side of Adolphe.

"We are ordered to halt, my lord."

"Halt? By whom?"

"By no less a personage than our mountain guide."

"What! Is it the Conrad you told me of?"

"The same, my lord."

"Ha! then the lady Rosaline cannot be far away."

"I think I see her now, your highness. If I mistake not, she sits yonder, upon her horse."

"Then, by the gods! she is safe! What, ho, meddler! Who are you?"

Conrad's sight was keen, and his eyes had become so used to the gloom that he could see quite distinctly. He could see plainly enough to tell that there were four men before him, all well mounted and well armed. One of them was, he felt sure, Prince Bertrand; one was his old travelling companion, Adolphe; and the others were evidently servants, who had accompanied the prince from Vannes. He could see that the prince was tall and broad-shouldered, though not of good shape. His neck was too short, and his shoulders too round; and our hero had little difficulty in imagining, from this ill-formed outline, that his face was harsh and unpleasant.

"Why don't you speak? Who are you?"

"I am an honest traveller on honest business," replied Conrad. "Who are you?"

"By the Shades of Pluto! I'll let you know who I am if you don't quickly take yourself out of my way!"

"Easy, sir. I have the road and you will answer me before you pass."

"What, ho! Here—Adolphe—Poins—Tithon. Sweep that dog from my path!"

The three men thus addressed drew their swords and pressed their horses forward.

"Hold!" exclaimed Conrad, in a tone of such authority that the horses stopped. "Do not rush into needless trouble. If you wish to pass quietly on your way, I shall not interfere."

"Answer me," cried the prince, raising himself in his stirrups: "Is not that the lady Rosaline yonder?"

"That lady, sir, is under my protection."

"It is the lady," spoke Master Adolphe.

"Then seize upon her, and let her protection devolve upon me."

Adolphe again started forward; but Conrad caught his rein and stopped his horse. The man-at-arms, with an oath, raised his sword, intending, no doubt, to cleave the skull of the venturesome mountaineer.

Conrad thought very quickly. Instinctive reason told him that the trial had come, and that if he would defend the maiden he must overcome obstacles as they arose. His first decisive movement was a rapid and effective one. He held the horse by the left hand, standing by the animal's near fore foot, his right hand grasping the hilt of his drawn sword. When he saw Adolphe raise his weapon to strike, he simply drew back his right arm, and in an instant more he had driven his keen blade upward through the fellow's bosom.

"Down with him!" cried Bertrand. "Strike him down!"

"Holy Mother! I am a dead man!" gasped the unfortunate man-at-arms.

Poins and Pithon hurried forward just in season to see Adolphe tumble from his horse. Conrad saw them coming, and with a quick movement he gave the foremost horse a prick that made him rear upright into the air, throwing his rider backward upon the ground. The second horseman was crowding up, and before he could really determine what had happened his horse had leaped upon one side, away from the approach of the mountaineer, bringing both his iron-clad forward feet down upon the prostrate form of the unhorsed rider. Thus was a second man disabled without the need of a sword-thrust.

"Poins! Poins!" shouted the prince. "'Fore God!" exclaimed the other, "Poins is under my horse's feet! What ho! Hallo! Poins—are you hurt?"

But Poins did not answer; and the other, who must have been Tithon, sprang from his saddle, and bent over the form of his prostrate companion.

"Poins—Poins—are you badly hurt?"

The man groaned, but made no other answer.

"Mercy! The blood is running from his head; and I fear his skull is broken!"

"Never mind," said the prince, leaping from his saddle as he spoke; "let him be, and come with me."

Bertrand strode forward until he came close upon our hero, when he stopped.

"How now, thou snarling, snapping dog! Do you know whom you have met?"

"I should judge that I had met enemies," replied the youth, without show of trepidation.

The prince gnashed his teeth, and lifted the point of his sword; but he restrained himself a little longer.

"Know, then," he hoarsely cried, "that I am BERTRAND, *Prince of Brittany!*"

Conrad had been reared amid mountain solitudes; and his adorations had only been given to the God of Heaven. The sound of earthly title did not strike upon his ear with much of awe-inspiring power; and the name which had just been so imposingly pronounced did not startle him at all. The name of Bertrand, Prince of Brittany, only called to his mind a cruel, unnatural child, and a heartless, wicked debauchee. He simply grasped his sword more firmly, and waited to hear what further the prince would say; but before Bertrand again spoke his ear caught the sound of a low, quivering voice behind him; and upon turning his head, he beheld Rosaline approaching him on foot.

"O! Conrad—expose yourself no more. My fate is sealed. Let me not drag you down with me!"

The youth took one step back, and waved his hand towards the trembling maiden.

"One moment, Rosaline—lady—only one moment. Back to your horse. I must speak with this man."

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

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ALPHABET OF SELF-MADE MEN.

To begin with the letter A, and dash hastily and skippingly on through the alphabet, we find that Anderson, the popular Danish novelist, was the son of a cobbler, and educated at a charity school, and that he tried for years to gain a living by various handicraft trades, being very frequently on the very brink of starvation. Beranger, the celebrated French lyric poet, neglected by his vagabond father, lived with his godfather, a poor tailor, and was a *gamin* in the streets of Paris till promoted for a time to the dignity of a pot boy. Elihu Burritt, as all know, was a blacksmith's apprentice. Carleton, the Irish novelist, who now enjoys a pension of £200 a year, is the son of a peasant, and begged his way to knowledge. Rafael Carrera, president of the republic of Guatemala, began life as a drummer-boy and a cattle-driver. Mr. Cobden is the son of a small farmer, and, entering a warehouse in London when a boy, rose through its various grades of service. Sir William Cubitt was a working miller, then a joiner, and then a millwright. Dumas, the great French novelist and dramatist, is the illegitimate son of a planter and a negress, and was in all but starvation in Paris, till he hit upon the way to distiction. Faraday, the eminent chemist, the son of a poor blacksmith, and began his career as the apprentice to a book-binder. Millard Fillmore, late president of the United States, was first a plough-boy, then tried the trade of a clothier, and was then apprentice to a wool-carder. The present emperor of Hayti was born a slave. Herring, the animal painter, began the profession of art with sign-boards and coach-pones. Jasmin, the Burns of the south of France, is the son of a tailor, and the grandson of a common beggar. Mr. Lindsay, M.P., the great ship-owner, left his home with 3s. 6d. in his pocket, to push his fortunes as a ship boy; he worked his passage to Liverpool by assisting in the coal-hole of a steamer; and for a part of the time after he arrived, begged during the day, and slept in the sheds and streets at night. Lough, the distinguished sculptor, began the world in the capacity of a plough-boy. Minie, the inventor of the well-known rifle, was a private soldier. Stanfield, the distinguished landscape painter, was a cabin boy, and a shipmaster was his first patron. Thiers, the well-known historian, and ex-minister of France, is the son of a blacksmith, and was educated gratuitously at the public school of Marseilles. Thomas Wright, the Manchester prison philanthropist, was a weekly worker in an iron foundry for forty-seven years, till a large sum of money was raised by subscription to enable him to carry on his philanthropical labors.

There is encouragement here, we fancy, for the poor and down-hearted; and likewise rebuke for those who are continually harping on the wrongs of the indigent, and the impassable barriers between the high and the low.

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THINK BEFORE YOU SPEND.

Do you really need the article? It is probably a pretty trifle in dress, in furniture; but what solid benefit will it be to you? Or it is some luxury for the table, that you can as well do without? Think, therefore, before you spend your money. Or you need a new carpet, new sofa, new chairs, new bedstead, or new dress; you are tempted to buy something a little handsomer than you had intended, and while you hesitate, the dealer says to you, "It's only a trifle more, and see how far prettier it is." But, before you purchase, stop to think. Will you be the better a year hence, much less in old age, for having squandered your money? Is it not wiser to "lay by something for a rainy day?" All these luxuries gratify you only for the moment; you soon tire of them, and their only permanent effect is to consume your means. It is by such little extravagancies, not much separately, but ruinous in the aggregate, that the great majority of families are kept comparatively poor. The first lesson to learn is to deny yourself useless expenses; and the first step towards learning this lesson is, to think before you spend.

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FLOWERS.

How the universal heart of man blesses flowers! They are wreathed round the cradle, the marriage altar, and the tomb. The Persian in the far east delights in their perfume, and writes his love in nosegays, while the Indian child of the far west claps his hands with glee as he gathers the abundant blossoms,—the illuminated scriptures of the prairies. The cupid of the ancient Hindoos tipped his arrows with flowers, and orange flowers are a bridal crown with us, a nation of yesterday. Flowers garlanded the Grecian altar, and hung in votive wreaths before the Christian shrine. All these are appropriate uses. Flowers should deck the brow of the youthful bride, for they are in themselves a lovely type of marriage. They should twine round the tomb, for their perpetually renewed beauty is a symbol of the resurrection. They should festoon the altar, for their fragrance and their beauty ascend in perpetual worship before the Most High.

UNDER AN UMBRELLA.

BY ETHEL LYNN.

Here am I at the office—umbrella at home
And dinner-time coming!
What weather!
I'll live in a Mackintosh, I do believe,
And give up the sun altogether.

The stages are full, and so are the cars,
Ah why did I fail to take warning:
Why scoff at the voice softly saying to me,
"Won't you take an umbrella this morning?"

Now if I go home, all bedraggled and wet,
Mrs. Susy will think, (maybe say so,)
"I told you to take it this morning, you know."
I'll get mad if she does—and I'll stay so."

Who cares for the rain, I'll not melt—hêre I go;
Let the tempest rage, I will not shun it.
What a noble umbrella, as large as my own,
That lady holds over her bonnet.

'Tis a fine shelter that, but the little gloved hand
Can scarce grasp the handle.
I wonder
If she wouldn't like me to hold it awhile,
And then I could keep my head under.

If one only dare—but I don't. There's the rain
Running down just within my coat collar;
It is taking the color all out of my tie,
That I yesterday bought for a dollar.

What a sweet, tiny hand—and oh! what a foot!
Well gaitered, elastic and tripping;
And so very small I am sure she must need
An arm—just to keep her from slipping.

How would it appear if I stepped to her side,
And, lifting my very limp beaver,
I should speak of the hand that is surely too small
For its burden—and ask to relieve her.

And then she would look like a sweet, startled fawn,
Say, "No, sir," and "Yes, sir," together;
If Susy should happen to hear of it all,
I'll declare it was caused by the weather.

What if Susy should be in that stage going by?
She would teaze me without ever stopping;
But I know she is not on account of the rain,
And the times are too hard to go shopping.

"Ahem! Will you pardon me?"
She doesn't look.
"Allow me!"—I take the umbrella.
"I told you to take it this morning, you know,"
Said Susy.
Just pity a fellow.

* * *

THE HUSBAND'S STRATAGEM.

BY AMY RANDOLPH.

The sunset had faded into gray, uncertain dusk. It was decidedly too dark to read—yet it was not time to call out the brilliant fairies of light that were imprisoned in the gilded tubes of the chandeliers. And so it happened that the room was yet in darkness, save for the twilight that struggled in through the heavy curtains of amethystine silk, and the ruddy, fitful gleams of the soft coal-fire that danced and sparkled in the grate. For it was late in October, and the autumn frosts were descending on the uplands, and even city homes looked all the brighter for a cheerful fire.

"All alone? and in a brown study, as I live! I hope I haven't interrupted you, Clayton?"

As if brisk little Dr. Colwell ever *interrupted* anybody! Does the sunshine *interrupt* the flowers in the garden—does an invigorating breeze *interrupt* the fevered brow on an August morning? We rather think not! And Dr. Colwell was a man decidedly after the order of sunshine and brisk breezes.

"Not at all, doctor—take this arm-chair."

"Well, I will," said the doctor, depositing himself comfortably in a nest of crimson silk cushions, and flinging his hat on an opposite table. "And you shall tell me what makes you look so despondent!"

"Did I look despondent?"

"*Did* you? A pretty question to ask an old fellow who has held you on his knee many a time! As if I didn't know every change of your countenance as completely as if it were a printed book! Something is wrong, Mark, so out with it."

"Really, sir," said Mark Clayton, laughing, "I was not aware——"

"Wasn't *aware!* O, fiddlestick, Mark! Perhaps you're not *aware* that you are a totally different man from the cheerful, sunny-hearted fellow of six months since. Some influence or other has changed you to a pensive, low-spirited spooney. Excuse the word, Mark, but I assure you it's eminently appropriate!"

"Thank you, doctor!" said Clayton.

"There now—was that a genuine laugh? Not a bit of it—only a hysterical cachination that an honest man ought to be ashamed of. Let me feel your pulse, my boy. Hum-m—ha-a—all right there. Now then, if you don't speak out I'll—I'll——"

What Dr. Colwell would have done, in that case, never was made known to the world, for just as the words were trembling upon his lip, the door opened, and a beautiful young lady swept into the room, bonneted and shawled, as if for a walk. The old gentleman started up with brisk gallantry.

"Mrs. Clayton—and as rosy as a pink. I needn't ask after your health, it seems."

"I am very well, thank you, doctor. Dear me, Mark, how very warm the room is! Why haven't you lighted the gas?"

Mr. Clayton obeyed by instantly illuminating the room. His wife threw herself carelessly into a chair.

"What's this envelope on the table? Tickets for the opera?"

"Yes. I thought you would like to hear the new *prima donna.*"

"Well, I shouldn't then. The opera always makes my head ache. I wish you ever remembered my likes and dislikes rightly."

"Then," said Clayton, smiling, "I am almost afraid to present this bracelet I bought this morning in remembrance of the day we were engaged to one another two years since."

"Oh," said Mrs. Clayton, ungraciously, "Turquoises—the very stone of all others that is most unbecoming to me."

"That's a pity, for I have had your initials marked on it, and consequently it cannot be exchanged."

"*I* can't wear the thing," said the wife, pettishly giving the velvet box a push along the table. "I wish, Mark, you would take your feet off that fender—of all the disagreeable habits men pick up, that is the worst!"

Mr. Clayton removed his feet from their obnoxious position without a word; the old doctor sat observing the couple in silence.

"Your handkerchief, dear," said Mark, leaning forward to restore an embroidered cobweb of fine muslin that had slipped from his wife's lap. As Mrs. Clayton took it, she uttered a little impatient sound.

"Mark—you have been smoking!"

"Only one cigar, Nina—and that was two hours ago. I didn't suppose your olfactory nerves were so delicately strung."

"It is too bad, Mark," fretted Nina Clayton, "when you know how I hate a cigar."

"It shall be the last time, puss!" said the husband, caressingly. "Come, sing us some of Dr. Colwell's favorite Scotch ballads before tea."

"I don't feel like singing," said Nina, petulantly.

"Play something, then."

"I suppose it never occurred to you that I might possibly be tired, after my walk!"

"I beg your pardon, dear; I did *not* think of it."

"Of course not; men are privileged to be selfish. By the way, did you get me that new piece of music?"

"Never once thought of it! But I'll be sure and bring it home to-morrow."

"You needn't," said Nina, applying the cobweb handkerchief to her eyes. "I don't care for it *now!*"

"Why, Nina, isn't it just as good to-morrow as to-day?"

Mrs. Clayton made no answer, but left the room, shutting the door behind her, with no gentle hand. Mark rose from his seat, with a disturbed countenance, as if to follow her.

"Sit still, Mark," said the doctor, quietly pushing him back into the chair. "I've discovered the secret of your changed aspect now!"

"I assure you, doctor, she does not mean——"

"Yes, yes—I understand! She's simply a spoiled, petulent child, who has unconsciously fallen into the habit of finding fault with everything that occurs. But, Mark—she makes your life miserable."

Clayton's head had fallen upon his hand.

"I can't deny it, doctor—I *am* miserable; and yet I know that Nina loves me dearly, in spite of all these little irritabilities. O, doctor, how happy I should be if she was only the Nina of a year ago."

The doctor had been adjusting and re-adjusting his spectacles, and polishing the glasses thereof, with great energy, for a minute or so. Suddenly he stopped, and fixed his keen gray eyes on Mark Clayton's face.

"Shall I tell you how to work the transformation?"

"Do, doctor."

"Then you must promise to adhere to my commands strictly and literally—no half-way obedience."

"It shall be implicit!"

"*Very* well," said the doctor.

"What does make you so late this morning, Mark?"

Mrs. Clayton was sitting in front of the steaming coffee-urn, in that same little room, which the fresh sunshine of the October morning, and the high-heaped glow of the fire both strove to enliven—and not in vain—as her husband lounged slowly into the room.

"*Late!* It's a pretty state of things if a man can't be allowed the poor privilege of a morning nap!"

Nina Clayton looked up in blank astonishment. Never before had her husband addressed her in that surly tone of voice. Mr. Clayton took his seat, giving his wife's work-basket an energetic push with his feet.

"I wish you would keep your things in their places, Nina! Confound this coffee! it's hot enough to take the skin off a fellow's throat!"

"I thought you liked it warm," said the abashed wife.

"*Thought* I liked it warm. If you want me to be scalded to death, why don't you do it at once! There—don't go to putting milk in and spoiling the whole thing. I thought so—a mess for the pigs!"

Nina could not stand it a moment longer, but began to cry, softly, behind the coffee-urn. Mr. Clayton banged out of the room—if he had stayed in it another moment, he would have broken his promise to Dr. Colwell in a most unpardonable manner.

However, Mrs. Nina had recovered her roses and bright eyes by the time her husband returned to the tea-table. He was silent and morose, but the little wife was determined to be amiable, and went to the piano, immediately after the meal was over, to give him the music for which he usually petitioned in vain. She had scarcely struck a few preliminary chords, ere he interrupted her.

"I wish you'd stop drumming on that piano, when my head aches!"

"I did not know your head ached, Mark!"

"You might have known it if you'd taken the trouble to notice!"

Nina's lip quivered. Clayton rose and took his hat.

"Where are you going, Mark?"

"Is it indispensable that I must repeat all my proceedings to you, Mrs. Clayton?"

"No—but—but——"

"I'm going to the theatre."

"But, Mark, the Waltons are coming to spend the evening; they sent me a note this morning."

"Very well, madam, what of it?"

"What will they think if you are not here?"

"They will probably think that it serves you quite right for making appointments without consulting your husband. In any event, it is nothing to me what they *think!*"

And he had walked out of the house before Nina had recovered from the burst of sobs, which was her only reply to his unkind speech.

To-morrow came, and the next day, and still Mark's demeanor remained unaltered. Poor Nina was thoroughly wretched. What could be the matter? was Mark becoming deranged, or—and a cold chill of horror ran through her frame at the very idea—was it possible that she was losing her place in his affections.

"I would die, by my own hand, did I believe that!" was her inward ejaculation, for, in her heart, Nina loved Mark Clayton with a love almost amounting to idolatry!

The upshot of Nina's troubled self-communings was, however, that on one morning within a week of the above-detailed events, she was sitting in Dr. Colwell's study, closely veiled, and robed in a quiet, pearl-gray dress, as if desirous of avoiding attention as much as possible. For to whom could Nina confide her griefs more naturally than to the old man who had known her husband from the days of his infancy?

"Mrs. Clayton?" was the doctor's surprised exclamation, on entering the room in which he had been apprised that "a lady" desired to speak with him.

Nina threw aside her veil and burst out crying! The interview was not a long one; and when at last the old gentleman dismissed his patient, with a fatherly kiss, her face was radiant, even through its mist of tears.

When Mark Clayton came home to dinner, he found his wife singing at her work.

"I suppose you have not put those buttons on my collars," said he, grimly.

"No, I haven't, Mr. Mark," said the little lady, archly defiant, and I don't intend to, either, until you have confessed yourself very sorry for the Bluebeard character you have been acting lately!"

"Nina!" Mark spoke with some uncertainty.

"Mark!"

And she buried her scarlet cheek on his shoulder.

"Ah, sir, no use dissembling any longer! I've been to Dr. Colwell, and heard all about it; and, indeed, Mark," she added, with a quivering lip, "the lesson is not thrown away. For until my own conduct was mirrored before me in your actions, I never dreamed how very, very disagreeable I was making myself!"

"My dear little wife," said Clayton, tenderly smoothing back her dishevelled curls, "if you did but know what it has cost me——"

"Not another word!" said Nina, imperatively putting her hand on his mouth, "it has been a bitter lesson, but it has not been lost on me. Let me seal our compact of future happiness with this kiss!"

"Very willingly, as far as I am concerned, Nina. But do you think you can ever forgive Dr. Colwell for presenting the bitter pill?"

"I'll send for him to tea this very evening," said Nina, fluttering briskly, like an energetic canary bird, round the dinner dishes, "and let him see that I *can* behave myself like a good little girl!"

And from that moment Dr Colwell never had a word of fault to find with Mark Clayton's looks. Nay, he was wont to assert that Clayton and his pretty wife were the happiest couple in his whole acquaintance!

* * *

THE MAN HERO.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

In a previous article, entitled the "Boy Hero," we sketched one of the early adventures of Lewis Wetzel and his brother Jacob, and promised the reader some further exploits of the former at a later period of life, which we will now proceed to relate.

Lewis Wetzel, as we then mentioned, early made himself master of the art of loading his rifle while running, and, as he was very fleet of foot, this acquirement gave him a fatal advantage over his Indian foes, who, in giving chase to him, after seeing his piece discharged, were not prepared to have him turn and fire upon them from what they believed to be an unloaded weapon.

In most of the border wars of his day, Wetzel took an active part, and, in the dangerous capacity of scout and spy, was of great assistance to the different military commanders of forts and forces along the whole frontier. He was always ready for the most forlorn and perilous adventures, and seldom failed to accomplish whatever purpose he undertook. His whole life was spent in the forest, and he was often alone in the wilderness, far from any civilized habitation, for days and weeks together. He had a deadly hatred of his savage foes, and never showed them any mercy. He seemed to possess a charmed life, and though often shot at and placed in almost hopeless perils, he always succeeded in escaping unharmed.

One day, while scouting along the banks of the Ohio, he saw a flat-bottomed boat, such as was used for freight and passage in the early navigation of that river, floating quietly down with the current, and a couple of men managing it with long oars or sweeps. He stopped and waited for them to come down a-breast of him, intending to exchange salutations and inquire the news from above; but before they reached a point opposite where he stood, he was surprised to hear them hailed by another party on shore, some two or three hundred yards higher up the stream.

He listened, and heard the party hailing beg, in the most piteous tones, for the boat to land and take him on board, stating that he had been a prisoner among the Indians, but had effected his escape, and was so far on his way back to his friends in Virginia. This petition for aid, though expressed in tones and language calculated to excite commiseration, at once aroused the antagonistic feeling of suspicion in the breast of the experienced woodsman, who knew that white men, either unfortunate captives or renegades, were frequently so used as decoys by the Indians, in order to get possession of a valuable boat and crew, which they could not otherwise reach.

"Ef this is a decoy-party," muttered Wetzel, as he heard the boatmen reply that they would land a little below, "then, [illegible] Killnigger, (tapping his trusty rifle,) you [illegible] I have got to have something to say in the matter."

Seeing the boat now turn in toward the shore, in a line to touch the bank not far from where he stood, Wetzel secreted himself in a thicket close at hand, and quietly waited for whatever might come to pass. The man that had hailed the boat, now kept along down the stream, for the apparent purpose of springing on board as soon as it should touch the bushes fringing the water; and, as fortune would have it, both drew together directly in front of the old woodman. The moment he got a glimpse of the man on shore, he fancied he knew him for a horse-thief, murderer and renegade; and he was thus prepared to see, as he did, a body of savages stealing down through the bushes, eager to begin their hellish work of slaughter and plunder. They came so near him, some of them, that he might have touched them with the muzzle of his rifle; but, intent upon their expected water-prize, they did not perceive him, as he lay stretched out in the bushes, carefully drawing a bead on the white man, whom, in case he should find his own safety would permit the shot, he was resolved to kill for his past crimes and present treachery. It was a good deal of a risk, he thought, to fire from the very centre as it were of a party of savages, upon one of their own number, and there were very few men, even among the brave borderers, who would have had the temerity to do so; but Wetzel seldom heeded danger in carrying out his designs, rather trusting to that good fortune which had always befriended him in the most desperate straits. Besides, as he philosophically reasoned, he would have to die some time, and would not die before his time, and there was no use for a man engaged in his perilous occupation to be calculating the chances of life and death too closely. So he watched for a favorable opportunity; and as soon as he got a clear view of the renegade, standing on the edge of the bank and begging the unsuspecting crew of the approaching boat to make haste, he took a deliberate aim, pulled the trigger, and sent a ball directly through his spine.

As the report of the rifle rang out upon the still air, and the villanous decoy fell dead into the water, the startled Indians betrayed their presence to their intended victims by simultaneous yells of surprise and dismay, and impulsively fired at the men on the boat. The latter, fortunately, not being hit by any of these random shots, and thus being apprised of the terrible ambuscade into which they had so nearly fallen, now made all haste to work their boat off toward the other shore. They finally succeeded in making good their escape; but did not know, till long afterward, that they were indebted to the brave scout for their preservation—they supposing that the man who hailed them had been killed by the pursuing savages among whom he had represented himself as having been a prisoner.

Meantime, the brave fellow who had saved them, was in a situation not to be envied. Fortunately for him, the Indians were all down in front of him, or along the river bank, and there was a heavy forest in his rear. By springing up and darting away at once, he got a few rods the start of the nearest. In the confusion of the moment, the majority believed that the shot which killed the renegade had been accidentally fired by one of their own party; but they were quickly undeceived by the peculiar whoops of two who saw our hero escaping, and then some six or eight sprung forward in pursuit, uttering yells of rage.

But Wetzel, as we have remarked, had got the start of the nearest by a few rods, and that was always a distance sufficient for his purpose, provided his pursuers had no loaded fire-arms in their possession, for not the fleetest runner in the whole Indian country could overtake him. After running about half a mile, Wetzel turned round and took deliberate aim at the foremost savage; but the latter, thinking this merely a ruse to check him till the fugitive could recover his breath—not dreaming that the piece which had killed his white friend could by any possibility have another charge in it—pushed forward and received a ball in his brain.

With a taunting laugh, Wetzel shook his fist defiantly at the others, who were but a little way behind their fallen comrade, and then set off again at the top of his speed. This time the pursuers were certain he would have no means of saving his life if they could only overtake him, and, eager for revenge, they merely glanced at the bloody corpse as they passed it, and pressed forward with yells of rage, straining every nerve. About three-quarters of a mile further on, the cunning old woodman turned and shot another; and this was repeated again and again. In a space of three miles, while running for his life, Lewis Wetzel loaded his rifle four times and killed four Indians; and then the others, with yells of dismay, believing him to be the devil, or something superhuman, gave up the chase, and took the shortest and quickest way back to their friends at the river, there to relate their unfortunate adventures and wonder over an inexplicable mystery. Not content with his victorious escape, Wetzel now went back far enough to scalp the last three Indians killed, and then struck off through the forest to a distant point. When the main body of the savages, on going to collect and bury their dead, found three of them scalped, their rage at the audacious triumph of the white man can better be imagined than described.

Wetzel had many adventures of a similar kind. On one occasion, chancing to meet a young hunter in the forest, the latter invited him home; but, on reaching the place, the house was found to be in ruins, and all the family murdered except a young girl, brought up by the parents of the young man, to whom she was engaged. She had been taken prisoner, as Wetzel readily discovered by the trail, and he at once proposed to follow the party who had captured her and attempt her rescue. They set off immediately, and came upon the camp of the enemy about dark. The captors consisted of three Indians and a white renegade. They concluded not to attack them that night, but kept a close watch till morning, when both fired together and killed two. The others fled to the nearest cover, and remained in concealment till Wetzel had loaded and fired his rifle at them at random, when, thinking they could easily kill or capture him, they at once sprung after him with loud yells. This was what he hoped to effect; and running away, he drew them into a long pursuit, and succeeded as usual in loading his rifle twice and killing both; after which he scalped them and returned to his young friend, whose gratitude, together with that of the rescued girl, he considered ample reward for his heroic achievement.

On another occasion, he and a comrade were surprised by a party of forty Indians. Wetzel shot one of them and took to flight. The savages fired in return and wounded Wetzel's companion, whom they soon overtook and killed. Our hero, not being wounded, was enabled to carry out his usual plan. He was pursued by four fleet-footed runners, and three of these he shot, one after the other. The fourth would have met the same fate; but, after seeing his last companion fall, he had the good sense to give up the chase and turn back, very quietly and philosophically observing:

"No catch that man—gun always loaded."

Like all [illegible] fond of the wild life of the wilderness, Wetzel could never endure the tameness and restraints of a civilized settlement; and as they gradually advanced, he as gradually retreated, till he found his last hunting ground beyond the Mississippi. It is computed that, along the course of the Ohio river, from the mountains of Pennsylvania to the valley of the Mississippi, at least fifty Indians fell by his hand alone. Take him all in all, he was a very remarkable woodman and Indian fighter, and probably did as much as any one pioneer to clear the way for the grand march of civilization into the mighty West.

* * *

DECLIVITY OF RIVERS.

A very slight declivity suffices to give the running motion to water. Three inches per mile, in a smooth, straight channel, gives a velocity of about three miles an hour. The Ganges, which gathers the waters of the Himalaya Mountains, the loftiest in the world, is, at 1,800 miles from its mouth, only about 800 feet above the level of the sea, and to fall these 800 feet in its long course the water requires more than a month. The great river Magdalena, in South America, running for 1,000 miles between two ridges of the Andes, falls only 500 feet in all that distance; above the commencement of the 1,000 miles, it is seen descending in rapids and cataracts from the mountains. The gigantic Rio de la Plata has so gentle a descent to the ocean that, in Paraguay, 1,500 miles from its mouth, large ships are seen which have sailed against the current all the way by the force of the wind alone—that is to say, which, on the beautifully inclined plane of the stream, have been gradually lifted by the soft wind, and even against the current, to an elevation greater than that of our loftiest spires.

* * *

WHAT IS PLEASANTER THAN SOCIAL SINGING?

When friends meet, and the lively word and social jest are intermingled with the voice of song, the spirit throws off care and thought, and recreates itself, that it may be better fitted for the hour of toil. Those who are able to meet at stated times, and spend an hour in the practice of music, lose much by neglecting to do so. There is not a hamlet or village, hardly a country place, where a singing circle may not be formed, and music practised; and this, too, not as a task, but as a source of deep, heartfelt pleasure. The desideratum for such circles is simple, home music, such as stirs the heart and causes its depths to well forth in gladness and joy, or to sympathize in pensive sadness. And this music should be new, else we tire by too much repetition; and various in kind and subject, else some chords of the heart are left untouched. What can supply this desideratum but periodicals devoted to the cultivation of the art? And who would forego such advantages, when a little exertion would secure them?

* * *

FIRST LOVE.

She put down her veil again immediately; her lips moved involuntarily as she lowered it: I thought I could see, through the lace, that the slight movement ripened to a smile. Still there was enough left to look on—enough to charm. There was the little rim of delicate white lace, encircling the lovely, dusky throat; there was the figure visible, where the shawl had fallen open, slender, but already well developed in its slenderness, and exquisitely supple; there was the waist, naturally low, and left to its natural place and size; there were the little millinery and jewelry ornaments that she wore—simple and commonplace enough in themselves—yet each a beauty, each a treasure, on *her*. There was all this to behold, all this to dwell on, in spite of the veil. The veil! how little of the woman does it hide, when the man really loves her!

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

A POOR author, who excites the hostility of the critics, is covered all over with quills like a hedge-hog. But he differs from the porcupine in the fact that the quills are shot into him instead of being weapons for him to shoot into others.

A MAN is utterly unfit to hold public office in excited times if he cannot properly and respectfully receive at the hands of an enlightened constituency any quantity of mud, eggs, or potatoes.

NATURE paints in the streets an eternal picture of moving men, children, beggars, and fine ladies, draped in red, green, blue, and gray—capped and based by heaven, earth, and sea.

To live in the country we must be content with the country as we find it, and not look for city airs in the very leaves and sunbeams. The bird expects his tree there and not a cage.

ELECTRICITY and magnetism change their habitations, but never perish. And the soul is in the body as electricity in the cloud or as magnetism in the ore.

THERE is a sort of comfort in the waywardness of discontent, a soothing music to the restlessness of the soul in the deep bass of hearty grumbling.

PEOPLE sometimes speak of a baby as if it were a kind of medal bestowed by fate upon a man for early hours and good conduct.

OCCASIONALLY the world sees by the light of some divine revelation, but, as a general thing, it depends on the spectacles that straddle its nose.

THE wind has been whistling for six thousand years or more, and yet it often performs more execrably than a plow-boy at the tail of his team.

THE leaves of the book of glory, though beautifully written over, generally smell of death and rottenness.

IT would be curious to see a list of things that everybody thinks and nobody says, and another of things that everybody says and nobody thinks.

MILKMEN are apt to get a stiff, upright carriage and an angular movement of the arm, reminding one of a pump and the working of its handle.

PROBABLY there is no man, distinguishable from a gorilla, that some good and even pretty woman could not shape a husband out of.

AN artist must identify himself with his subject. He cannot paint a tree without in some sort becoming a tree.

No human heart is ever vacant. It has as an inhabitant either an angel or a devil.

WE turn the dinner-tables upon the ladies, but they turn the tea-tables upon us.

TAXES on books and newspapers are so many Government dragons chained about the tree of knowledge.

NOTHING is wholly good or bad. There are dark spots in the sun and bright ones in a coal mine.

THERE are preachers who hold the coin of the parish as the instrumental parts of their religion.

LET a girl stray in the fields after roses, and they will redden her cheeks.

WE should read no history written since the days of the scriptural writers, for it is *profane.*

GRAVITATION is the outspread hand of God forcing all things into their places and keeping them there.

PASTORS shouldn't devour the substance of their flocks' pastures.

IN earthly governments, "divine rights" are human wrongs.

THE world's happiest periods give the faintest echoes from the pages of history.

LIFE may be lyric or epic, as well as a poem or a romance.

PATIENTS are never cured by doctors. They either cure themselves or die.

IT matters not how often you stoop if what you stoop for is worth picking up.

WHEN we know that a man has deceived us, we appear more ridiculous to ourselves than to him.

GOD often strikes straight strokes with crooked sticks.

* * *

CURRENT ITEMS

A SLIGHT, fragile-looking little man appeared before a city magistrate the other day, and complained of being ill-treated by his wife, who, he said, was much larger and stronger than he was, and was in the habit of boxing his ears and beating him, and had even knocked him down and stamped upon him. The magistrate was puzzled what to do; but in the midst of his quandary the wife came bouncing into the court-room, and ordered her husband to leave and go home at once or she'd fix him, and in contempt of the court seized the poor fellow by the collar, and was about to drag him away when she was taken in charge by a couple of officers, and the magistrate finally subdued her fiery spirit by fining her ten dollars and sending her to Blackwell's Island for twenty days.

A POOR woman was found in a starving condition in the New Bowery, one evening lately; and on being interrogated, she stated that she had not tasted food, except what she had gleaned from swill barrels and the gutters, for forty-eight hours, and had all that time been without shelter. And yet her husband was once a well-to-do merchant in this city, and she had lived up-town in style; but misfortunes had come upon them, her husband and children had died, and she left a homeless waif upon the great stream of metropolitan life. She was taken to a public charitable institution and well cared for.

TEN or a dozen young men and women were caught in a violent rain storm one night lately, up town, as they were going home from a place of amusement, and taking refuge under an awning, they passed the time as merrily as possible, waiting for an omnibus; but all at once one of the young ladies staggered, uttered a piercing shriek, and fell to the pavement. On examination it was discovered that she had been standing on an iron grating, and that her foot slipping through, she had swayed to one side so as to sprain her ankle, which had occasioned the shriek and fall. She was of course tenderly cared for.

A WELL-DRESSED villain made an insulting remark to a young lady in an omnibus in Broadway, the other day; a gentleman sitting opposite to her seeing by her looks that something was the matter, asked her if she had been annoyed, and on being told the facts, he called upon other gentlemen in the vehicle to help eject the insulter, who was thereupon summarily pitched out neck and heels to the great astonishment of spectators, to whom, however, he did not vouchsafe the slightest explanation of the phenomenon.

A COUPLE of ruffianly brutes got into a fight, in a vacant lot, in Harlem, one day recently, and, surrounded by a number of acquaintances and backers, beat, kicked, bit and gouged each other, until their countenances were horribly disfigured and mutilated; and both of them becoming blind, they could not continue the disgraceful combat longer, and were taken away by their respective friends.

A CART horse, that had been left standing in Fulton street, ran away, one day recently, and dashing promiscuously into a crowd at the corner of Greenwich street, knocked down and ran over several persons, each of whom was more or less injured, and one of them having his leg broken below the knee.

AN old woman, who peddles apples around the streets, becoming incensed at a couple of ladies who depreciated her fruit, threw mud into their faces and over their dresses, and assailed them with shocking Billingsgate, until a policeman arrested her and carried her off to a station-house.

A POLICEMAN attempted to arrest a disorderly man in Avenue A, one day recently, when the latter got the advantage of the officer, and throwing him upon a pile of stones broke his leg in two places; but two other policemen coming up, the ruffian was captured and taken to prison.

A LITTLE boy, about five years old, went on to the roof of his parents' dwelling in Grove street, one day lately, to spin his top, and falling through the sky-light, he broke one of his arms and otherwise seriously injured himself.

A SERVANT-GIRL, living in a family in Williamsburgh, set her clothes on fire, at the kitchen range, one evening recently, and was hurt so badly it was supposed she could not long survive.

A WELL-DRESSED woman was arrested in Canal street, a few days ago, for passing counterfeit money. She had put off about forty dollars in five and ten dollar bills, when her career was stopped by a detective.

TWENTY-FIVE deserters were lately arrested in this city in one day, and taken to Governor's Island.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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THE ROMAN EMPERORS.—No. 8.

BY JOHN S. C. ABBOTT.

DOMITIAN, NERVA AND TRAJAN.

Domitian, the reputed murderer of his brother Titus, ascended the throne of the Roman empire about the year 81. His character had been always such as to excite contempt. Still he succeeded in grasping the sceptre of power with a firm hand, and the Roman people trembled in view of the tyranny to which they were to be doomed. Malignity and imbecility were conspicuous features in his character. The renowned general Agricola, by heroic achievements in Italy, was acquiring fame. Domitian, jealous of his rising greatness, caused him, as is alleged, to be poisoned. Though possessed of no military ability, and never having achieved anything upon the field of battle, he was ambitious of enjoying a triumph such as Rome conferred upon her great conquerors. He therefore got up a splendid military parade, and entered the gates of Rome in gorgeous triumph as if just returning from heroic and successful war. Thousands of the populace were engaged to cheer him as he rode by in his war chariot. Tattered banners were borne aloft, as if they had been wrested from the enemy, while multitudes of his own slaves were dressed in foreign garb, and with pinioned arms were driven along to grace his triumph, as if they were captives taken on the field of battle.

He demanded that he should be worshipped with divine honors, and had gold and silver statues of himself placed in many conspicuous positions, before which those who passed were compelled to offer religious homage. All who approached him were required to address him by those titles which were appropriate only to the deity. Every one who was suspected of hostility to him was immediately put to death. All Christains were persecuted with inexorable cruelty. To perpetuate his fame, he rebuilt, with magnified splendor, the capitol which had been burnt during the war between Vitellius and Vespasian. The gilding alone, with which he decorated this gorgeous structure, cost, by careful estimate, a sum equal to twelve millions of our dollars. With such reckless prodigality did he plunge into debt, that Martial, one of the most distinguished of the Roman satirists, says of him, in one of his epigrams:

> "If the emperor had called in all his debts, Jupiter himself, even though he had made a general auction of Olympus, would have been unable to pay two shillings in the pound."

The wicked are generally, if not always, wretched. This malignant tyrant had not a moment of peace. Conscious that there were millions who hated him, and who would be willing to sacrifice their own lives to take his, he was in constant dread of assassination. There was no one whom he could trust, and his own most intimate acquaintances were objects of constant suspicion. He was accustomed to write, in a pocket tablet, the names of those who, having incurred his suspicion, were to be handed over to the executioner or the assassin. His wife, Domitia, whose alarm had probably, by some cause, been excited, one day got a peep at this book, while her husband was sleeping. She found her own name, with those of others of her friends, on the fatal list. She immediately communicated to them the intelligence. There was not an hour to be lost. The only alternative was, kill or be killed. The plunge of a dagger rid the world of a monster who disgraced humanity. He had reigned fifteen years, and died at the age of forty-five, in the year of our Lord 91.

Rome, whose lips had long been silenced by terror, shouted with joy, as the glad tidings of the death of the tyrant ran through her crowded streets. His statues were struck from their pedestals and dragged through the mire. The Senate, fearful that the army might anticipate them and place one of their ambitious generals upon the throne, immediately, upon the very day of the assassination of Domitian, conferred the imperial purple upon Nerva, an old man, universally revered for his integrity and for the many kindly qualities of his heart, but a man of very small executive ability. With characteristic amiability, he issued the impolitic decree, upon ascending the throne, that no Senator, during his reign, whatever his crime, should be punished with death. With benevolence more sagacious and politic, he recalled all the Christians who had been banished from Rome by the persecutions of his predecessors.

The Roman soldiers, whose arms sustained the empire, and whose depravity was continually clamoring for bribes and voluptuousness, wished for an emperor of congenial nature, who would pander to their base passions. The army began to cry out against the reign of justice and mercy, and the clamor became so loud as to fill both the Senate chamber and the palace with consternation. Nerva, feeling himself quite unable to cope with difficulties so momentous, sent to the Danube, where there was an illustrious general by the name of Trajan, in command of an army, and ordered him immediately to repair to Rome to assist him in conducting the affairs of empire. Trajan had been in Rome but a few months when the good old man Nerva died, having reigned but one year.

Trajan assumed the sceptre, without encountering any opposition. He was a man of majestic mien, of lofty traits of character, and was in the prime of life. On the north side of the Danube there was a warlike tribe of semi-barbarians, called Dacians, who were in revolt against Rome. Trajan, full of military ardor, himself headed an army, and, with a bloody hand, quelled the revolt. He had hardly returned to Rome when the Dacians rose again. Again the emperor penetrated their country. That it might be more accessible to his armies, he constructed a bridge across the Danube, which was one of the most stupendous structures of ancient Roman art. The ruins of this magnificent bridge still remain, revealing the twenty-two arches with which it spanned the stream. A war of five years ensued before the Dacians were brought into entire subjection to Rome. The military road, trod by the hardy legions of the empire, from the banks of the Danube through the heart of Dacia, even to Bendee on the Dneister, can still be distinctly traced out. This conquest was deemed so important that Trajan reared a majestic column in Rome to commemorate it. The shaft was raised to a height of one hundred and eighteen feet, where it was surmounted by a statue of the emperor. Upon a spiral belt, twined around the column, there were sculptured all the principal events of the expedition. This column of Trajan still stands, one of the most admired works of art in the world. It was the model of that world-renowned column reared to the honor of the French army, which stands in the Place Vendome, in Paris.

Though Trajan was eminently a just and humane man, he still was not a Christian. He had probably heard Christianity grossly perverted, and consequently regarded the new and rapidly spreading faith as an injurious superstition. Still not disposed to persecute, he wrote to Pliny, a governor of a remote province, requesting him not to search out the Christians, but if they were brought before him, and proved to be Christians, to put them to death. Inspired with the love of military glory, Trajan commenced a campaign of conquest through the East, and advanced victoriously to the Tigris. Descending to the Persian gulf, he built a fleet, and compelled all the nations on the Arabian coast to do homage to Rome. Exulting in his unbroken career of conquest, he was preparing to penetrate the remote Indies, when that summons came which kings and peasants must alike obey. There is no royal road through the vale of death. The emperor, conscious that he must die, made a great effort to reach Rome before the fatal hour should arrive. But death was inexorable. He had but just entered the province of Cilicia, when his spirit ascended to the tribunal of God. He had reigned nineteen years, and was in the 64th year of his age.

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SOLID COMFORT.

Thousands of people, ay and of rich people too, pass through life without knowing what solid comfort is. To the puppets of Fashion it is a thing impossible. Their existence is an intermittant fever, alternating between artificial excitement and real exhaustion. They are as truly players as if they strutted and gesticulated behind the footlights of the theatre. Nay, they are worse off than professional mummers; for when these have played their parts for the amusement of the crowd, they put off their trappings, become rational beings, and enjoy themselves in a natural way. But fashionable life is *all* false. The season in town is a round of theatrical display. The "dresses and properties" are got up in a spirit of envious competition, not half so excusable as that of rival managers, whose bread-and-butter depends upon the attractiveness of their trumpery. In the summer, when the theatres close, the professional actors take a recess and turn their backs for the time being upon the stage; but the show folk of fashion only shut up their exhibition rooms in the cities to go on parade at the watering-places, and inaugurate, in the green-room of Nature, a species of melo-drama just as hollow and artificial as the high-life comedy they enacted in town. Fashionable establishments, fashionable equipages, fashionable visiting, all the pretension and frippery and dissipation of fashionable society—what are they but stage humbugs of the most unsatisfactory kind? Their fitting spiritual complement is a fashionable church. That blessed household angel, Comfort, never yet dwelt under a fashionable roof.

Nor does she take up her abode with the hard-fisted money-grubber, who cares for none of these things, but only for the gold which ostentatious people waste upon them. Our friend Nimrod Clutch, Esq., who hunts the "Almighty Dollar" he knows not how to spend, in a threadbare coat and napless hat, is as ignorant of comfort as Mrs. Pavoria Peacock, the leader of *ton*, who sweeps down the Cydnus of high life like a Cleopatra's galley, royally rigged and decked with silken sails. Fools who confound wealth with happiness, point to him as he passes to and fro on his gnome-like errands, as the man whose touch turns everything to gold; but they see not that gold is a more powerful necromancer than he, since it has changed him into marble. Not a porter who draws a truck, not a day-laborer who cleans the streets, but knows more of genuine enjoyment than Nimrod Clutch, the man of millions.

The true tabernacle of comfort is the home of him who divides his time rationally between wholesome labor, whether of the body or the mind, and improving recreation; to whom the mere shows of life are nothing; who values money not as an end, but as a means; who economises in the days of his strength and vigor, that poverty may not darken his threshold when he grows old, nor—should it please Heaven to call him away untimely—chill the hearts of the loved ones he may leave behind; who is content with his own fireside circle, enlivened now and then by the presence of a few friends who are "friends indeed;" and who has so ordered all his doings with his fellow-men and fulfilled his obligations to Heaven, that no craven fear of the next world clouds his happiness in this.

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—A statement lately appeared in the LEDGER, based upon a paragraph in a Boston journal, to the effect that Mr. A. T. Stewart, our great dry-goods merchant, had bought up all the butter in the Boston market, for the purpose of sending it to Europe to pay for goods purchased by him there. We learn from the very best authority—Mr. Stewart himself—that this story has been manufactured out of whole cloth—that there is not a particle of truth in it; but, that, on the contrary, he is heartily opposed to all speculations of that or a kindred character. We do not know what object the Boston paper had in starting the rumor—perhaps it had no particular object besides making a paragraph, as distinguished men like Mr. Stewart are generally considered fair subjects for an item when something is wanted to "fill up;" but we can easily imagine how annoying such statements must be to a gentleman whose feelings and whose interests are alike opposed to such schemes. Of a similar piece to the statement referred to, is one that was quite prevalent in this city a month or two ago concerning the hoarding of immense quantities of cotton goods by Mr. Stewart's house. That firm was represented to have bought up all the goods of this description which they could find for the sake of controlling the market and enhancing the price. This rumor is just as destitute of truth as the other. Mr. Stewart's whole course, since this war commenced, in aiding and strengthening the government by every means in his power, as a leading merchant and citizen, in its efforts to crush the rebellion, ought to be a sufficient contradiction in itself to all such imputations. No man has been more prominent than he, both with his purse and his influence, in giving tone to public sentiment.

THOUGHTS AS THEY OCCUR.—No. 122.

BY ONE WHO KEEPS HIS EYES AND EARS OPEN.

> "And the ravens brought Elijah bread."—1 *Kings*, 17: 6.

I have summer birds and winter birds, and both are free as air. I do not object to caged birds, so that they are born to it. It irks me to see a bird reduced from freedom to bondage. But when a canary bird is bred to the house, as his fathers were, through many generations, I see no reason for sympathy, any more than for my horse, for domestic fowl, or any other creature that has been reclaimed from a wild to a tame state. But, I keep no canaries. Too many have died on my hands. I now rely, in summer, on our song birds, and, in winter, I am supplied from the North with all that I can desire, without risks, care, or trouble.

Do you ask what I mean? Look out of my window, on this magnificent morning. Do you not see the flash of a white wing yonder? Do you not see, far up, a score of large-winged gulls sailing in wide circuits, as if they were scouts from above, reconnoitering the city yonder? These gulls are my birds.

In summer we seldom see them. They have business in the far north. There is many a cliff and headland, many a desolate rock and island that swarms with their young. They are thicker than snow-flakes. And when the snow-flakes begin to fall in the far north, I know it by infallible tokens. I have a barometer. Long trails of water-fowl, travelling solemnly through the heavens, and all in one direction, tell the story of the northern climate. Roses are blooming yet, in October, with us, and for a month tender flowers will brave the cooler days. But I know that frosts are stinging the north, and that ice is shutting up the bays and closing the rivers under the poles; for here come the messengers to tell the news. And now I look for my winter flocks. At first a gray gull, or two. Then a white fellow with black tipped wings, each week the number increasing, tell me just what is going on. I know that thousands and myriads of gulls are finding their way along the St. Lawrence, and down the chain of lakes to the Mississippi, and along its sedgy banks to the Gulf of Mexico; filling all the inland waters with scattering flocks. At the same time another phalanx drop small bodies at every bay and river along the Atlantic down to the coast of Florida, and round into the Gulf. The whole country is filled with them; they tarry in every latitude where the waters are unfrozen.

One of my pleasures is to watch them in New York harbor. They are a solemn bird. They seem to have no frivolities. They do not appear to frolic or coquet. They give little token of noticing the throng and roar of the city, or the endless rush of boats and ships through the harbor. They dip down to the water for a morsel of food—sometimes alighting on the floating ice, to peck a bit of food from its frozen bed, sometimes they sit in the water, and ride for a moment or two on the swell. On some days they all fly low. They are almost tame. They skim close under the ferry-boats. They keep near the water. On the very next day, perhaps, one or two only seem disposed to touch the water. The white-winged throng are far up in the air, swinging slowly and gracefully through long circuits, with no apparent aim but their own aristocratic pleasure. On windy days they seem to put themselves in training. They take a challenge from the wind, and for hours seem to contend with it—flying high as if to overrace it—then, with oblique path, coming down almost to the water, only to mount up again and breast the wind with full pressure. All this struggle is without any definite aim, except the mere gymnastic pleasure of contest. They are seeking nothing. They are avoiding nothing. They have long and strong wings, and it is their pleasure to use them. And my pleasure it is to watch them, to see the light flash from them at every turn as if they wore phosphorescent feathers, and to admire the unaffected grace of every motion.

Why should I doubt that ravens brought the old prophet his food in the wilderness? Birds are yet bringing food to all who will receive God's messages from them! Every sparrow carries a precious part of Christ's sermon on its back—a better lecturer than the ecclesiastical eagles that adorn churches. And birds bring food for the ear, and food for the eye, to all whose hunger is for more than bread. God sends birds to feed his servants yet!

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SUCCESSFUL WEEKLY PAPERS.

In England, as well as in this country, weekly journalism has reached stupendous proportions, and is divided into three marked classes of papers—the pictorials, the journals devoted to tales and light literature, and the weekly *news* papers which make the current news of the time their chief feature. Of the first class, the *Illustrated London News* takes the lead in Europe, the *London Journal* being at the head of the second class, and *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* of the third class. In this country, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, *Harper's Weekly*, and the *Illustrated New York News* are the chief of the pictorials; the *Weekly Tribune*, *Weekly Herald* and *Weekly Times* represent the *news* papers; and the LEDGER (which has improved on its European prototypes by adding to its other features, essays, biographical and historical sketches, &c.) stands confessedly at the head of its class.

When the New York *Herald* was started, the great, mammoth, lumbering journals of Wall street occupied the leading position in daily journalism in this city. The *Herald*, however, soon achieved such a reputation for obtaining *news* in advance of other papers that no merchant or business man could afford to be without it. Besides, it was of a convenient size, and was sold at a price that put it within the reach of all. Singular, however, as it may at first sight appear, the *Weekly Herald*, although an important member of the guild of weekly *news* papers, never attained anything like the great success of the daily,—and why? Simply because its subscription price was, like that of the great unwieldy journals of Wall street, which the *Daily Herald* had, in a measure, supplanted,) so high that the masses could not afford to take it, especially when they could get other weekly newspapers at half the cost. We have often wondered why the proprietor of the *Herald*, when he discovered that his system of conducting a live daily paper, at a reasonable price, proved so successful, did not adopt the same method with his weekly. Lately, however, we observe that the price of the *Weekly Herald* has been reduced to $2 a year—and $1 50 for clubs—and there are evident indications that its proprietor is now making a *speciality* of it. Its circulation since the price was reduced—and new features introduced into its columns—has largely increased; and we have no doubt it will ere long, owing to its great facilities for obtaining *news*, attain the same commanding position among weekly news papers which the daily *Herald* occupies among daily papers.

It is an agreeable feature in weekly journalism that the three classes of successful weekly papers to which we have referred, to wit: the *pictorial*, the *literary* and the *news*, do not in the least interfere or conflict with each other. Indeed, in London, the proprietors of two of the most popular *literary* papers also publish weekly *news* papers. But in this country we classify business more strictly; each man confines himself to one particular line, and is content with working it up into a great and overshadowing success.

AN OLD FRENCH SKIPPER.

Among the war-vessels lately ordered from France with troops and stores for the French army in Mexico, we notice one bearing the name *Jean Bart*—a name famous in the annals of the French marine, as that of an old commander alike remembered for his daring seamanship and his queer social eccentricities.

In the middle of the seventeenth century there dwelt at Dunkerque, on the coast of France, an honest seafaring man named Bart. Biographers differ with regard to his position as a salt-water man; some averring that he was a fisherman only, while others state that he was a regular "skipper" and commanded a trading vessel. To him, on the 20th of October, 1650, was born a son, who was christened Jean, and who in course of time became so prominent a historical character in the service of his native country, that now, after the lapse of two centuries, we find a French frigate rejoicing in the commemoration of his name.

Many circumstances connected with the early life of Jean Bart favor the supposition that he was brought up as a fisherman. In all his subsequent career he never lost a certain flavor of the "rough," so common a characteristic of that free, unconventional profession; and his notions of discipline were always based rather upon the belaying-pin practice that prevails on board the mackerel-sloop than upon the more dignified usages of the quarter-deck.

While yet a mere lad, Jean Bart left his native coast, and entered the Dutch service as a cabin-boy; but on the outbreak of war between France and Holland, he returned to his allegiance, and soon distinguished himself by such acts of daring in the privateering line as to attract the notice of Louis XIV. In those days, however, it was a hard matter to get over the difficulty of plebeian origin, and the son of the obscure fisherman of Dunkerque received no further encouragement from his royal patron than a commission to cruise under letters-of-marque, in which occupation he harassed terribly the commerce of England and Holland, who were then at war with France. While he was in Bergen, in Norway, there came one day into port an English vessel, the captain of which, on going ashore, went into a little tavern to seek for some refreshment. Seated at a table near him was a tall, stalwart mariner, blowing great clouds from a long Dutch pipe and taking occasional pulls from a beaker of brandy. There was something in the appearance of this man that induced the Englishman to inquire his name. They told him that the robust mariner was one Jean Bart.

"Ho, ho!" said the Englishman, aside, to his mate, by whom he was accompanied; "that's the very man we're looking for; let us lay a trap for him."

Thereupon he introduced himself to Jean Bart, drank with him, smoked with him, and wound up with an offer to fight him, ship against ship.

"With all my heart," replied the French corsair—"I am laying in stores to-day—to-morrow I shall be at your service."

"Bergen is a neutral port, however," rejoined the Englishman; "we must get out to sea before we open upon each other. Suppose you breakfast with me, to-morrow morning, on board my ship, when we can arrange matters before we weigh anchor."

"What'll you give me for breakfast," said Jean Bart, who spoke English fluently. "Cannon-balls and sword-blades, raw, are the only dishes to be passed between foes like you and me."

"Wouldn't Dutch herrings and *eau-de-vie* do for once, instead?" asked the Englishman.

"Well, for once, perhaps," replied the French skipper. "I'll be on hand; brandy and Jean Bart always went well together."

When Jean Bart had fully availed himself of the hospitality of the English privateersman, he remarked to the latter that breakfast being over it would be as well for them to proceed to business; and, rising from table, he prepared to return to his ship, telling the Englishman to up anchor, and put to sea after him without loss of time.

"Hold!" cried the latter, blowing his whistle. "You are my prisoner. I have sworn an oath to take you to England, alive, if possible."

Quick as lightning Jean Bart knocked his entertainer down, and, lighting a fuze from his tobacco-pouch, before the astonished sailors could lay a hand on him, he rushed toward a barrel of powder, to which he had had an eye ever since coming aboard, shouting, "Here goes!—hands off, there, or look out for a blow up!" It is easy to suppose that Jean found himself master of the situation. The crew of his ship, which was anchored at no great distance, heard his cry, boarded the English vessel, and, after a stiff, hand-to-hand fight with her crew, captured her, and Jean Bart took her to Brest, disregarding, on account of the treachery of the English captain, the fact of Bergen being a neutral port.

While Dunkerque was blockaded by the English and Dutch fleets, Jean Bart ran the blockade one dark night, with a small fleet of privateersmen under his command, and, crossing the channel, made descents at several points upon the coast of Scotland, sacking the fishing villages and frightening the islanders from their propriety. Emboldened by this success, he attacked the town of Newcastle, took it by storm, burned some five hundred houses to the ground, and sailed safely away with a handsome amount of plunder.

Subsequently, the great services rendered by Jean Bart to his country, smoothed over the obstacles arising from his obscure origin, and the king gave him command of a ship. He sailed with the squadron commanded by the Chevalier Forbin, was taken prisoner along with that officer, in an engagement with the English, and carried to Plymouth, where he and his companion were imprisoned in a room at a little inn, the windows of which were fitted with iron bars to prevent the escape of such distinguished prisoners. They had not been long there when an Ostend vessel came into port, the captain of which, claiming relationship with Jean Bart, craved and obtained permission to visit him. By this friend the prisoners were furnished with a file and some other implements, through which they effected their escape, and, embarking in a small open boat, actually succeeded in reaching the coast of France without accident.

To one of the habits and associations of this brave but rough mariner, the vicissitudes of the sea were nothing compared to the hardship of making occasional appearances at court—a necessity entailed upon him as he rose by successive steps to the command of a squadron, and wore upon his brawny chest decorations bestowed by the hand of his sovereign. Many droll anecdotes are told of the way in which Jean Bart used to shock the nerves of the polished and powdered courtiers by whom Louis Quatorze was fawned upon and flattered.

Once the king said to him: "Admiral, I wish I had ten thousand such sailors as you."

"I believe you!" returned Jean Bart, with an emphasis that left no doubt as to his sincerity.

The first time Bart ever visited the court, he called so early that he had to wait for some hours in an ante-chamber, before he could obtain an interview with the king. To while away the tedious hours he lit his pipe, without which he never went anywhere, and had succeeded in filling the apartment with fragrance when an officer of the guard entered, and, not knowing who the distinguished visitor was, ordered him to desist from smoking, saying that it was against the regulations of the palace to do so.

"Tell the king," said Jean Bart, coolly blowing a stream of smoke into the landman's eyes, "that it was in his service I learned to smoke, and that I believe his majesty is too good a man to object to my indulging in so small a luxury."

When the king was told of this he laughed heartily, and, on finding who his visitor was, gave orders that Jean Bart should be allowed to smoke in the palace at all times. By and by the king sent for him, and he was immediately surrounded by the courtiers, who vied with each other in lavishing praise upon him. They were particularly anxious to know how he managed to get out of Dunkerque that time he ran the blockade. "I will show you," said Jean Bart, and, having ranged the obsequious flatterers in the order of a blockading squadron, he knocked them about with his fists and elbows until they were glad to get out of his way.

Soon the name of Jean Bart became well known in the court circles at Versailles. The fashionable people got over their horror at his uncouth manners; his eccentricities became amusing to them, and the Comte de Forbin, under whose particular charge he was placed at court, gained from that circumstance the nickname of the "Bear-keeper."

Jean Bart was not always a pleasant travelling companion. On one occasion, when commanding a ship, he was commissioned to carry the Prince de Conti to Elsinore. When well out at sea, they were attacked by an English ship and nearly captured, but managed to get away after a hard tussle. The prince, whose political plans would have been much interfered with had he been taken prisoner, made a set speech to Bart, congratulating him upon the courage and skill displayed by him in the engagement; but the reply made by the rough mariner was characteristic: "You shouldn't have been taken prisoner at any rate," said he; "my son was stationed by the magazine, with a lighted match in his hand, ready to blow us up if the Englishman got the better of us."

The son here alluded to afterwards rose to high rank in the naval service of France. From his early boyhood he accompanied his father on his voyages, sharing his dangers and emulating his bravery and skill. It is said that when the boy was hardly yet ten years old, his father thought he perceived a shade of fear upon his face during a fierce battle, whereupon he chained him by the leg to the mainmast, leaving him exposed to a storm of iron hail. They had a rough way of making sailors in those days, but it seems to have been effectual.

One day the king had given Jean Bart an order for one thousand crowns, payable to him by a certain official named Pierre Grouin, whose bureau was at Paris. Arrived at the city, Bart entered Grouin's house while the latter was at dinner with a party of friends, and, upon being ushered in, handed the order to him, with a request that he would pay over the amount. But Grouin, deceived by the rough appearance of his visitor, whom he took for a mariner in distress, snapped the paper impatiently from him, and, hardly glancing at it, threw it upon the floor.

"Pick that up!" shouted Jean Bart, drawing his sword and flashing a dangerous look upon Grouin.

"Ay," said one of the guests, who just then recognized the visitor, "pick it up quickly, I would advise you; this is Jean Bart, with whom it is no joke to become tangled in a broil."

Upon this Grouin politely requested Jean Bart to go with him to his bureau, where he was proceeding to count out the thousand crowns in bags of silver, when Jean Bart stopped him, saying, "Do you take me for a pack-mule?—hand over the amount in gold!"

It is related that Jean Bart never was tempted to get himself up as a "swell" but on one occasion of his making an appearance at court. Relying exclusively upon his own knowledge and taste in dress, he caused to be made for him a coat, waistcoat and breeches of cloth of gold, which, by some extraordinary infatuation, he insisted that the tailor should line with cloth of silver. The uneasy movements of Jean Bart in this guise caused great amusement at court; but he could never be persuaded to appear again in anything but his sailor's garb.

Mingled with a stolid indifference which caused the courtiers to look upon Jean Bart as little better than a courageous bull-dog, there was a lurking element of sagacity in matters outside his profession. In one of the ships commanded by him there was a brave sailor, or marine, who had the misfortune to kill a Portuguese in a row on shore. The man, who was a Frenchman, had won the esteem of Jean Bart by sundry acts of daring, and, when an examination was about to be made into the circumstances, Bart advised him to plead that he had killed the Portuguese for having used blasphemous language regarding the Holy Virgin. The plea was put in, accordingly, and the man acquitted.

Jean Bart was on the road to the highest honors conferred upon the naval commanders of France, when his career was cut short by an attack of pleurisy, of which he died at his native place, Dunkerque, on the 27th of April, 1702, in the fifty-second year of his age. His remains are at rest in the old church of that town, in a public square of which, so lately as the year 1845, a statue from the chisel of David was erected to his memory.

The portraits of bluff old Jean Bart represent him as a thin, but powerfully built man, picturesquely attired in the sailor costume of his time. It would be rather a shock to the modern mind to see a brawny mariner walking Broadway in a stagey hat with drooping plumes, a slashed jerkin, a shawl round his body studded with huge brass-mounted horse-pistols, and immense jack-boots folded down at the top. And yet that is just our memory of a portrait once seen by us of Jean Bart.

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BREAKFAST.

The foul fiend fly away with him, or her, who comes with a doleful, sour face to breakfast. Breakfast! the most delightful meal of the day; when hope reigns triumphant over yesterday's petty cares and frets; and—ready to start afresh with the glorious new day—we wonder what has become of the fears and forebodings with which we laid our heads upon our last night's pillow. Ah, then—to have a doleful wet-blanket thrown, by somebody who has banished sleep by too much supper the night before, or otherwise made a fool of him or herself, is a sin, deserving of a cup of cold, muddy coffee, and that is the greatest punishment I can think of. Next to pleasant breakfast faces, and neat attire, commend me to a freshly gathered bouquet upon the table. Nor need it be of necessity of hot-house growth. A few rich, red and white clover blossoms, or a bunch of the pretty blue-eyed wood anemone, or a pansy or two, or even a few sweet scented geranium leaves, give a delightful zest to one's morning meal. No argument if you please with it. No metaphysics; no logic chopping. Speak not of the "rise in butter," or look forebodingly forward to anything. Eat, drink, smile and be happy; and don't be too much absorbed in the morning paper to peril the table-cloth with a hasty elbow; for a superfluous drop in the saucer of one's cup, or a spot on the cloth, breaks the spell for *some* people. What else soever the gods may deny us for the rest of the day, pray heaven they send us a *serene breakfast*.

FANNY FERN.

SOLDIERS' SONG.

BY ALICE CARY.

Sing, brother soldiers,
  Sing near and far,
For the light of hope is breaking
  From the red flower of war;
Breaking, and brightening
  Amazingly grand,
On the black battle smoke
  That drives through the land.

Sing, brother soldiers,
  Sing near and far,
For the light of peace is breaking
  From the red flower of war.
The light of peace is breaking,
  And all men agree
We are bound to have a country,
  Where every soul is free!

Sing, brother soldiers,
  Sing near and far,
For the light of love is breaking
  From the red flower of war.
The light of love is breaking
  From the red and reeking sod,
And man is new-created
  In the image of his God.

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SELF-MADE;

OR,

"OUT OF THE DEPTHS."

BY MRS. E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "THE HIDDEN HAND," "THE LOST HEIRESS," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIV.

OVER NORA'S GRAVE.

Oh, Mother Earth! upon thy lap,
  Thy weary ones receiving,
And o'er them, silent as a dream,
  Thy grassy mantle weaving,
Fold softly, in thy long embrace,
  That heart so worn and broken,
And cool its pulse of fire beneath
  Thy shadows old and oaken.
Shut out from her the bitter word,
  And serpent hiss of scorning;
Nor let the storms of yesterday
  Disturb her quiet morning. WHITTIER.

When the funeral ceremonies were over, and the mourners were coming away from the grave, Mr. Wynne turned to them and said:

"Friends, I wish to have some conversation with Hannah Worth, if you will excuse me."

And the humble group, with the exception of Reuben Grey, took leave of Hannah and dispersed to their several homes. Reuben waited outside for the end of the parson's interview with his betrothed.

"This is a great trial to you, my poor girl, may the Lord support you under it!" said Mr. Wynne, as they entered the hut and sat down.

Hannah sobbed.

"I suppose it was the discovery of Mr. Brudenell's first marriage that killed her?"

"Yes, sir," sobbed Hannah.

"Ah! I often read and speak of the depravity of human nature; but I could not have believed Herman Brudenell capable of so black a crime," said Mr. Wynne, with a shudder.

"Sir," replied Hannah, resolved to do justice in despite of her bleeding heart, "he isn't so guilty as you judge him to be. When he married Nora he believed that his wife had been killed in a great railway crash, for so it was reported in all the newspaper accounts of the accident; and he never saw it contradicted."

"His worst fault then appears to have been that of reckless haste in consummating his second marriage," said Mr. Wynne.

"Yes, and even for that he had some excuse. His first wife was an artful widow, who entrapped him into a union and afterwards betrayed his confidence and her own honor. When he heard she was dead, you see, no doubt he was shocked; but he could not mourn for her as he could for a true, good woman."

"Humph; I hope then, for the sake of human nature, that he is not so bad as I thought him. But now, Hannah, what do you intend to do?"

"About what?" inquired the poor woman, sadly.

"About clearing the memory of your sister and the birth of her son from unmerited shame," replied Mr. Wynne, gravely.

"Nothing," she answered, sadly.

"Nothing?" repeated the minister, in surprise.

"Nothing," she reiterated.

"What! will you leave the stigma of undeserved reproach upon your sister in her grave and upon her child all his life, when a single revelation from you, supported by my testimony, will clear them both?" asked the minister, in almost indignant astonishment.

"Not willingly, the Lord above knows. Oh, I would die to clear Nora from blame!" cried Hannah, bursting into a flood of tears.

"Well, then do it, my poor woman! do it! you *can* do it," said the clergyman, drawing his chair to her side and laying his hand kindly on her shoulder.—"Hannah, my girl, you have a duty to the dead and to the living to perform. Do not be afraid to attempt it! Do not be afraid to offend that wealthy and powerful family! *I* will sustain you, for it is my duty as a Christian minister to do so, even though they—the Brudenells—should afterwards turn all their great influence in the parish against me. Yes, I will sustain you, Hannah! What do I say?—*I?*—A mightier arm than that of any mortal shall hold you up!"

"Oh, it is of no use! the case is quite past remedying," wept Hannah.

"But it is *not*, I assure you! When I first heard the astounding news of Brudenell's first marriage with the Countess of Hurstmonceaux, and his wife's sudden arrival at the Hall, and recollected at the same time his second marriage with Nora Worth, which I myself had solemnized, my thoughts flew to his poor young victim, and I pondered what could be done for her, and I searched the laws of the land bearing upon the subject of marriage. And I found that by these same laws—when a man in the life-time of his wife marries another woman, the said woman being in ignorance of the existence of the said wife, shall be held guiltless by the law, and her child or children, if she have any by the said marriage, shall be the legitimate offspring of the mother, legally entitled to bear her name and inherit her estates. That fits precisely Nora's case. Her son is legitimate. If she had in her own right an estate worth a billion, that child would be her heir-at law. She had nothing but her good name! Her son has a right to inherit *that*—unspotted, Hannah! mind, unspotted! Your proper way will be to proceed against Herman Brudenell for bigamy, call me for a witness, establish the fact of Nora's marriage, rescue her memory and her child's birth from the slightest shadow of reproach and let the consequences fall where they *should* fall, upon the head of the man! They will not be more serious than he deserves. If he can prove what he asserts—that he himself was in equal ignorance with Nora of the existence of his first wife, he will be honorably acquitted in the court, though of course severely blamed by the community. Come, Hannah, shall we go to Baymouth to-morrow about this business?"

Hannah was sobbing as if her heart would break.

"How glad I would be to clear Nora and her child from shame, no one but the Searcher of hearts can know! But I dare not! I am bound by a vow! a solemn vow made to the dying! Poor girl! with her last breath she besought me not to expose Mr. Brudenell, and not to breathe one word of his marriage with her to any living soul!" she cried.

"And *you* were mad enough to promise!"

"I would rather have bitten my tongue off than have used it in such a fatal way! But she was dying fast, and praying to me with her uplifted eyes and clasped hands and failing breath to spare Herman Brudenell. I had no power to refuse her; my heart was broken; so I bound my soul by a vow to be silent! And I must keep my sacred promise made to the dying, I must keep it, though till the Judgment Day that shall set all things right, Nora Worth, if thought of at all, must be considered a fallen girl and her son the child of sin!" cried Hannah, breaking into a passion of tears and sobs.

"The devotion of woman passes the comprehension of man," said the minister, reflectively. "But in sacrificing herself thus, had she no thought of the effect upon the future of her child?"

"She said he was a boy; his mother would soon be forgotten; he would be my nephew, and I was respected," sobbed Hannah.

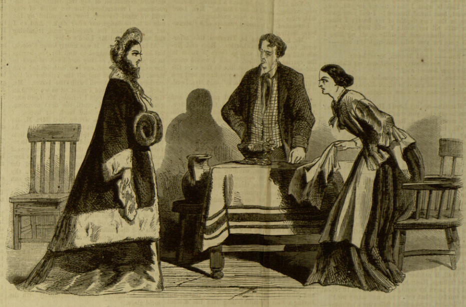
"In a word, she was a special pleader in the interest of the man whose reckless haste had destroyed her!"

"Yes! that was it! that was it! Oh, my Nora! oh, my young sister! it was hard to see you die! hard to see you covered up in the coffin! but it is harder still to know that people will speak ill of you in your grave, and I cannot convince them that they are wrong!" said Hannah, wringing her hands in a phrenzy of despair.

For trouble like this the minister seemed to have no word of comfort. He waited in silence until she had grown a little calmer, and then he said:

"They say that the fellow has fled. At least he has not been seen at the Hall since the arrival of his wife. Have *you* seen anything of him?"

"He rushed in here like a madman the day she died, received her last prayer for his welfare, and threw himself out of the house again, Heaven only knows where!"



THE COUNTESS OF HURSTMONCEAUX IN THE CABIN OF HANNAH WORTH.

"Did he make no provision for this child?"

"I do not know; he said something about it, and he wrote something on a paper; but indeed I do not think he knew what he was about; he was as nearly stark mad as ever you saw a man; and, anyway, he went off without leaving anything but that bit of paper; and it is but right for me to say, sir, that I would not have taken anything from him on behalf of the child. If the poor boy cannot have his father's family name, he shall not have anything else from him with my consent! Those are my principles, Mr. Wynne! I can work for Nora's orphan boy, just as I worked for my mother's orphan girl, which was Nora herself, sir."

"Perhaps you are right, Hannah. But where is that paper of which you spoke? I should much like to see it," said the minister.

"The paper he wrote and left, sir?"

"Yes; show it to me."

"Lord bless your soul, sir, it wasn't of no account; it was the least little scrap, with about three lines wrote on it; I didn't take any care of it. Heaven knows that I had other guess things to think of than that. But I will try to find it if you wish to look at it," said Hannah, rising.

Her search of course was vain, and after turning up everything in the house to no purpose she came back to the parson, and said:

"I dare say it is swept away or burnt up; but, anyway, it isn't worth troubling one's self about it."

"I think differently, Hannah; and I would advise you to search, and make inquiry, and try your best to find it. And if you do so, just put it away in a very safe place until you can show it to me. And now good-bye, my girl; trust in the Lord, and keep up your heart," said the minister, taking his hat and stick to depart.

When Mr. Wynne had gone, Reuben Grey, who had been walking about behind the cottage, came in, and said:

"Hannah, my dear, I have got something very particular to say to you; but I feel as this is no time to say it exactly, so I only want to ask you when I may come and have a talk with you, Hannah."

"Any time, Reuben; next Sunday, if you like."

"Very well, my dear; next Sunday it shall be! God bless you, Hannah; and God bless the poor boy, too. I mean to adopt that child, Hannah, and cowhide his father within an inch of his life if ever I find him out!"

"Talk of all this on Sunday when you come, Reuben, not now; oh, not now!"

"Sartainly not now, my dear; I see the impropriety of it. Good-bye, my dear. Now, shan't I send Nancy or Peggy over to stay with you?"

"Upon no account, Reuben."

"Just as you say, then. Good-bye, my poor dear."

And after another dozen affectionate adieux, Reuben reluctantly dragged himself from the hut.

CHAPTER XV.

NORA'S SON.

Look on this babe; and let thy pride take heed,
  Thy pride of manhood, intellect or fame,
That thou despise him not; for he indeed,
  And such as he in spirit and heart the same
Are God's own children in that kingdom bright,
  Where purity is praise, and where before
The FATHER'S throne, triumphant evermore,
  The ministering angels, sons of light,
Stand unreproved because they offer there,
  Mixed with the Mediator's hallowing prayer,
The innocence of babes in Christ like this.
M. F. TUPPER.

Hannah was left alone with her sorrows and her mortifications.

Never until now had she so intensely realized her bereavement and her solitude. Nora was buried; and the few humble friends who had sympathized with her were gone; and so she was alone with her great troubles. She threw herself into a chair, and for the third or fourth time that day broke into a storm of grief. And the afternoon had faded nearly into night before she regained composure. Even then she sat like one palsied by despair, until a cry of distress aroused her. It was the wail of Nora's infant. She arose, and took the child, and laid it on her lap to feed it. Even Hannah looked at it with a pity that was almost allied to contempt.

It was in fact the thinnest, palest, puniest little object that had ever come into this world prematurely, uncalled for and unwelcome. It did not look at all likely to live. And as Hannah fed the ravenous little skeleton, she could not help mentally calculating the number of its hours on this earth, and wishing that she had thought to request Mr. Wynne, while he was in the house, to baptize the wretched babe, so little likely to live for another opportunity. Nor could Hannah desire that it should live. It had brought sorrow, death and disgrace into the hut, and it had nothing but poverty, want and shame for its portion in this world; and so, the sooner it followed its mother the better, thought Hannah—short-sighted mortal.

Had Hannah been a discerner of spirits to recognize the soul in that miserable little baby-body!

Or had she been a seeress to foresee the future of that child of shame!!

Reader, this boy is our hero; a real hero, too, who actually lived and suffered and toiled and triumphed in this land!

"Out of the depths" he came indeed! Out of the depths of poverty, sorrow and degradation; he rose, by God's blessing on his aspirations, to the very zenith of fame, honor and glory!

He made his name, the only name he was legally entitled to bear—his poor wronged mother's maiden-name—illustrious in the annals of our nation!

He was good and great; his goodness won him love wherever he was personally known; his greatness won him homage throughout the world.

He lived to be one of the brightest stars in Columbia's diadem of light.

His true name? It is burning in my heart, and thrilling on my tongue, and trembling on my finger tips; it may be surmised by those who are very familiar with the early lives of our demi-gods; but for obvious reasons must be veiled under a fictitious one here.

His history? It is a guiding star to every youth of every land, to show them that there is no depth of human misery from which they may not rise to earthly honor as well as to eternal glory.

But this is to anticipate.

No vision of future glory arose before the poor weaver's imagination, as she sat in that old hut, holding the wee boy on her lap, and for his sake as well as for her own begrudging him every hour of the few days she supposed he had to live upon this earth. Yes Hannah would have felt relieved and satisfied if that child had been by his mother's side in the coffin rather than been left on her lap.

Only think of that, my readers; think of the utter, utter destitution of a poor little sickly, helpless infant, whose only relative would have been glad to see him dead! Our Ishmael had neither father, mother, name nor place in the world. He had no legal right to be in it at all; no legal right to the air he breathed, or to the sunshine that warmed him into life; no right to love, or pity, or care; he had nothing—NOTHING BUT THE EYE OF THE ALMIGHTY FATHER REGARDING HIM. But Hannah Worth was a conscientious woman, and, even while wishing the poor boy's death, she did everything in her power to keep him alive, hoping all would be in vain.

Hannah, as you know, was very, very poor. And with this child upon her hands she expected to be much poorer. She was a weaver of domestic carpets and counterpanes, and of those coarse cotton and wollen cloths of which the common clothing of the plantation negroes are made, and the most of her work came from Brudenell Hall. She used to have to go and fetch the yarn and then carry home the web. She had a piece of cloth now ready to take home to Mrs. Brudenell's housekeeper; but she abhorred the very idea of carrying it there, or of asking for more work.

Nora had been ignominiously turned from the house, cruelly driven out into the midnight storm; that had partly caused her death. And should *she*, her sister, degrade her womanhood by going again to that house to solicit work, or even to carry back what she had finished, to meet, perhaps, the same insults that had maddened Nora?

No, never; she would starve and see the child starve first. The web of cloth should stay there until Jim Morris should come along, when she would get him to take it to Brudenell Hall. And she would seek work from other planters' wives in the neighborhood.

She had four dollars and a half in the house—the money, you know, that old Mrs. Jones, with all her hardness, had yet refused to take from the poor woman. And then Mrs. Brudenell owed her five and a half for the weaving of this web of cloth. In all she had ten dollars, eight of which she owed to the professor of odd jobs for his services at Nora's funeral. The remaining two she hoped would supply her simple wants until she found work. And, in the meantime, she need not be idle; she would employ her time in cutting up some of poor Nora's clothes to make an outfit for the baby—for if the little object lived but a week it must be clothed—now it was only wrapped up in a piece of flannel.

While Hannah meditated upon these things, the baby went to sleep on her lap, and she took it up and laid it in Nora's vacated place in her bed.

And soon after Hannah took her solitary cup of tea, and shut up the hut and retired to bed. She had not had a good night's rest since that fatal night of Nora's flight through the snow storm to Brudenell Hall, and her subsequent illness and death. Now, therefore, Hannah slept the sleep of utter mental and physical prostration.

The babe did not disturb her repose. Indeed it was a very patient little sufferer, if such a term may be applied to so young a child. But it was strange that an infant so pale, thin and sickly, deprived of its mother's nursing care besides, should have made so little plaint and given so little trouble. *Perhaps in the lack of human pity, he had the love of heavenly spirits, who watched over him, cared for him, soothed his pains and stilled his cries.* We cannot tell how that may have been, but it is certain that Ishmael was an angel from his very birth.

The next day, as Hannah was standing at the table, busy in cutting out small garments, and the baby-boy was lying upon the bed equally busy in sucking his thumb, the door was pushed open and the professor of odd jobs stood in the doorway, with a hand upon either post, and sadness on his usually good-humored and festive countenance.

"Ah, Jim, is that you? Come in, your money is all ready for you," said Hannah, on perceiving him.

It is not the *poor* who "grind the faces of the poor." Jim Morris would have scorned to have taken a dollar from Hannah Worth at this trying crisis of her life.

"Now, Miss Hannah," he answered, as he came in at her bidding, "please don't you say one word to me 'bout de filthy lucre, 'less you means to 'sult me an' hurt my feelin's. I don't 'quire of no money for doin' of a man's duty by a lone 'oman! Think Jim Morris is a man to 'pose upon a lone 'oman? Hopes not, indeed! No, Miss Hannah! I aint a wolf, nor likewise a bear! Our Heabenly Maker, he gib us our lives an' de earth an' all as is on it, for ourselves free! And what have we to 'render him in 'turn? Nothing. And what does he 'quire ob us? O'ny lub him an' lub each oder, like human beings an' 'mortal souls made in his own image to live forever! and not to 'screw and 'press each oder, and dewour an' prey on each oder like de wild beastesses dat perish! And I considers, Miss Hannah——"

And here, in fact, the professor, having secured a patient hearer, launched into an oration that were I to report it word for word, would take up about nineteen columns of this paper. He brought his discourse round in a circle, and ended where he had begun.

"And so, Miss Hannah, say no more to me 'bout de money, 'less you want to woun' my feelin's."

"Well, I will not, Morris; but I feel so grateful to you that I would like to repay you in something better than mere *words*," said Hannah.

"And so you shall, honey, so you shall, soon as eber I has de need and you has de power! But now don't you go and fall into de pop'lar error of misparagin' o' *words*. Words! why words is de most powerfullist engine of good or evil in dis worl'! Words is to idees what bodies is to souls! Wid words you may save a human from dispair, or you may drive him to perdition! Wid words you may confer happiness or misery! Wid words a great captain may rally his discomforted troops, an' lead 'em on to wictory! wid words a great congressman may change the laws of de land! Wid words a great lawyer may 'suade a jury to hang an innocent man, or to let a murderer go free! It's bery fashionable to misparage words, callin' of 'em 'mere words.' Mere words! mere fire! mere life! mere death! mere heaben! mere hell! as soon as mere words! What are all the grand books in de worl' filled with? words! What is the one great Book called? What is the Bible called? DE WORD!" said the professor, spreading out his arms in triumph at this peroration!

Hannah gazed in very sincere admiration upon this orator, and when he had finished, said:

"Oh, Morris, what a pity you had not been a white man, and been brought up at a learned profession!"

"Now aint it, though, Miss Hannah?" said Morris, with an injured air.

"You would have made such a splendid lawyer or parson!" continued the simple woman, in all sincerity.

"Now wouldn't I, though?" complained the professor. "Now aint it a shame I'm nyther one nor t'other? I have so many bright idees all of my own! I might have lighted de 'ciety an' made my fortin at de same time! Well!" he continued, with a sigh of resignation, "if I can't make my own fortin I can still lighten de 'ciety if only dey'd let me; an' I'm willin' to do it for nothin'! But people won't 'sent to be lighted by me; soon as ever I begins to preach or to lecture in season, an' out'n season, de white folks, dey shut up my mouf, short! It's trufe I'm a-tellin' of you, Miss Hannah! Dey aint no ways like you. Dey can't 'preciate ge'nus. Now I mus' say as you *can*, in black or white! An' when I's so happy as to meet long of a lady like you who can 'preciate *me*, I'm willin' to do anything in de wide worl' for her! I'd make coffins an' dig graves for her an' her friends from one year's end to de t'other, *free* an' glad of de chance to do it!" concluded the professor, with enthusiastic good will.

"I thank you very kindly, Jim Morris; but of course I would not like to give you so much trouble," replied Hannah, in perfect innocence of sarcasm.

"La, it wouldn't be no trouble, Miss Hannah! But then, ma'am, I didn't come over here to pass compliments, nor no sich! I come with a message from old madam up yonder at Brudenell Hall."

"Ah," said Hannah, in much surprise and more disgust, "what may have been her message to me?"

"Well, Miss Hannah, it may have been words of comfort, such as would become a Christian lady to send to a sorrowing fellow-creetur; only it wasn't," sighed Jim Morris.

"I want no such hypocritical words from *her!*" said Hannah, indignantly

"Well, honey, she didn't send none!"

"What did she send?"

"Well, chile, de madam, she 'quested of me to come over here an' hand you dis five dollar an' a half, which she says she owes it to you. An' also to ax you to send by the bearer, which is *me*, a certain piece of cloth, which she says how you've done wove for her. An' likewise to tell you as you needn't come to Bredinell Hall for more work, which there is no more to give you. Dere, Miss Hannah, dere's de message jes as de madam give it to me, which I hopes you'll 'sider as I fotch it in de way of my perfession, an' not take no 'fence at me, who never meant any towards you," said the professor, deprecatingly.

"Of course not, Morris. So far from being angry with you, I am very thankful to you for coming. You have relieved me from a quondary. I didn't know how to return the work or to get the pay. For after what has happened, Morris, the cloth might have staid here and the money there, forever, before I would gone near Brudenell Hall!"

Morris slapped his knee with satisfaction, saying:

"Just what I thought, Miss Hannah! which made me the more willing to bring de message. So now if you'll jest take de money an' give me de cloth I'll be off. I has got some clocks and umberell's to mend to-night. And dat minds me! if you'll give me dat broken coffee-mill o' yourn I'll fix it at de same time," said the professor.

Hannah complied with all his requests and he took his departure.

He had scarcely got out of sight when Hannah had another visitor, Reuben Grey, who entered the hut with looks of deprecation and words of apology.

"Hannah, woman, I couldn't wait till Sunday! *I couldn't rest! Knowing of your situation, I felt as if I must come to you and say what I had on my mind! Do you forgive me?*"

"For what?" asked Hannah in surprise.

"For coming afore Sunday."

"Sit down, Reuben, and don't be silly. As well have it over now as any other time."

"Very well, then, Hannah," said the man, drawing a chair to the table at which she sat working, and seating himself.

"Now, then, what have you to say, Reuben?"

"Well, Hannah, my dear, you see I didn't want to make a disturbance while the body of that poor girl lay unburied in the house; but now I ask you right up and down who is the wretch as wronged Nora?" demanded the man with a look of sternness Hannah had never seen on his patient face before.

"Why do you wish to know, Reuben?" she inquired in a low voice.

"To KILL HIM."

"Reuben Grey!!!"

"Well, what's the matter, girl?"

"Would you do MURDER?"

"Sartainly not, Hannah; but I will kill the villain as wronged Nora wherever I find him, as I would a mad dog."

"It would be the same thing! It would be murder!"

"No, it wouldn't, Hannah. It would be honest killing. For, when a cussed villain hunts down and destroys an innocent girl, he ought to be counted an outlaw that any man may slay who finds him. And if so be he don't get his death from the first comer, he ought to be sure of it from the girl's nearest male relation or next friend. And if every such scoundrel knew he was sure to die for his crime and the law would hold his slayer guiltless, there would be a deal less sin and misery in this world. As for me, Hannah, I feel it to be my solemn duty, to Nora, to womenkind and to the world, to seek out the wretch as wronged her and kill him where I find him, just as I would a rattle-snake as had bit my child."

"They would HANG you for it, Reuben!" shuddered Hannah.

"Then they'd do very wrong! But they'd not hang me, Hannah! Thank Heaven, in these here parts we all vally our women's innocence a deal higher than we do our lives, or even our honor. And if a man is right to kill another in defence of his own life, he is doubly right to do so in defence of woman's honor. And judges and juries know it, too, and feel it, as has been often proved. But anyways, whether or no," said Reuben Grey, with the dogged persistence for which men of his class are often noted, "I want to find that man to give him his dues."

"And be hung for it," said Hannah, curtly.

"No, my dear, I don't want to be hung for the fellow. Indeed, to tell the truth, I shouldn't like it at all; I know I shouldn't beforehand; but at the same time I mustn't shrink from doing of my duty first, and suffering for it afterwards, if necessary! So now for the rascal's name, Hannah!"

"Reuben Gray, I *couldn't* tell you if I would, and I *wouldn't* tell you if I could! What! do you think that I—a Christian woman—am going to send you in your blind, brutal vengeance to commit the greatest crime you possibly could commit?"

"Crime, Hannah! why it is a holy duty!"

"Duty! Reuben! do you live in the middle of the nineteenth century—in a Christian land, and have you been going to church all your life, and hearing the gospel of peace preached to this end?"

"Yes! For the Lord himself is a God of Vengeance. He destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah by fire, and once He destroyed the whole world by water!"

"'The devil can quote scripture for his purpose,' Reuben! and I think he is prompting you now! What! do you, a mortal, take upon yourself the Divine right of punishing sin by death? Reuben! when from the dust of the earth, you can make a man, and breathe into his nostrils the breath of life, then, perhaps you may talk of punishing sin with death. You cannot even make the smallest gnat or worm live! How then could you dare to stop the sacred breath of life in a man?" said Hannah, solemnly.

"I don't consider the life of a wretch who has destroyed an innocent girl sacred by any means," persisted Reuben.

"*The more sinful the man, the more sacred his life!*"

"Well! I'm blowed to thunder, Hannah, if that aint the rummest thing as ever I heard said!—the more sinful a man the more sacred his life!!! What will you tell me next, I wonder?"

"Why, this: that if it is a great crime to kill a good man, it is the greatest of all crimes to kill a bad one!"

To this startling theory, Reuben could not even attempt a reply. He could only stare at her in blank astonishment. His mental calibre could not be compared with Hannah's incapacity.

"Have patience, dear Reuben, and I will make it all clear to you! The more sinful the man, the more sacred his life should be considered, because *in that* lies the only chance of his repentance, redemption and salvation. And it is a greater crime to kill a bad man than to kill a good one, because if you kill a good man, you kill his body only; but if you kill a bad man, you kill both his body and his soul! Can't you understand that now, dear Reuben?"

Reuben rubbed his forehead, and answered, sullenly, like one about to be convinced against his will:

"Oh, I know what you mean well enough, for that matter."

"Then you must know, Reuben, why it is that the wicked are suffered to live so long on this earth! People often wonder at the mysterious ways of Providence, when they see a good man prematurely cut off and a wicked man left alive! Why, it isn't mysterious at all to me! The good man was ready to go, and the Lord took him; the bad man was left to his chance of repentance. Reuben, the Lord, who is the most of all offended by sin, spares the sinner a long time to afford him opportunity for repentance! If he wanted to punish sin with death in this world, he could strike the sinner dead! But he doesn't do it, and shall we dare to? No! we must bow in humble submission to his awful words—'Vengeance is MINE!'"

"Hannah, you may be right; I dare say you are; yes, I'll speak plain—I know you are! but it's hard to put up with such! I feel baffled and disappointed, and ready to cry! A man feels ashamed to set down quiet under such mortification!"

"Then I'll give you a cure for that! It is the remembrance of the Divine Man and the dignified patience with which he bore the insults of the rabble crowd upon his day of trial! You know what those insults were, and how he bore them! Bow down before His majestic meekness, and pay Him the homage of obedience to His command of returning good for evil!"

"You're right, Hannah!" said Grey, with a great struggle, in which he conquered his own spirit. "You're altogether right, my girl! So you needn't tell me the name of the wrong-doer! And indeed you'd better not; for the temptation to punish him might be too great for my strength, as soon as I am out of your sight and in his!"

"Why, Reuben, my lad, I *could* not tell you if I were inclined to do so. I am sworn to secrecy!"

"Sworn to secrecy! that's queer *too!* Who swore you?"

"Poor Nora, who died forgiving all her enemies and at peace with all the world!"

"With him too?"

"With him most of all! And now, Reuben, I want you to listen to me. I met your ideas of vengeance and argued them upon your own ground, for the sake of convincing you that vengeance is wrong even under the greatest possible provocation, such as you believed that we had all had. But, Reuben, you are much mistaken! We have had no provocation!" said Hannah, gravely.

"What! no provocation! not in all the wrong done to Nora!"

"There has been no intentional wrong done to Nora!"

"What! no wrong in all that villainy?"

"There has been no villainy, Reuben!"

"Then if *that* wasn't villainy, there's none in the world! and never was any in the world! that's all I have got to say!"

"Reuben, Nora was married to the father of her child. He loved her dearly, and meant her well. You must believe this, for it is as true as Heaven!" said Hannah, solemnly.

Reuben pricked up his ears; perhaps he was not sorry to be entirely relieved from the temptation of killing and the danger of hanging.

And Hannah gave him as satisfactory an explanation of Nora's case as she could give, without breaking her promise and betraying Herman Brudenell as the partner of Nora's misfortunes.

At the close of her narrative Reuben Grey took her hand, and holding it, said gravely:

"Well, my dear girl, I suppose the affair must rest where it is for the present. But this makes one thing incumbent upon us." And having said this, Reuben hesitated so long that Hannah took up the word and asked:

"This makes *what* incumbent upon us, lad?"

"To get married right away!" blurted out the man.

"Pray, have you come into a fortune, Reuben?" inquired Hannah, coolly.

"No, child, but——"

"Neither have *I*," interrupted Hannah.

"I was a going to say," continued the man, "that I have my hands to work with——"

"For your large family of sisters and brothers——"

—"And for you and that poor orphan boy, as well! And I'm willing to do it for you all! And we really must be married right away, Hannah! I must have a lawful right to protect you against the slights as you'll be sure to receive after what's happened, if you don't have a husband to take care of you."

He paused and waited for her reply; but as she did not speak, he began again:

"Come, Hannah, my dear, what do you say to our being married o' Sunday?"

She did not answer, and he continued:

"I think as we better had get tied together arter morning service! And then you know I'll take you and the bit of a baby home long o' me, Hannah. And I'll be a loving husband to you, my girl; and I'll be a father to the little lad with as good a will as ever I was to my own orphan brothers and sisters. And I'll break every bone in the skin of any man that looks askance at him too! Don't you fear for yourself or the child, my dear. The country side knows me for a peaceable disposed man; but it had rather not provoke me for all that, because it knows when I have a just cause of quarrel, I don't leave my work half done! Come, Hannah, what do you say, my dear? Shall it be o' Sunday? You won't answer me? What! crying, my girl? crying! what's that for?"

The tears were streaming from Hannah's eyes. She took up her apron and buried her face in its folds.

"Now what's all that about?" continued Reuben, in distress; then suddenly brightening up, he said—"Oh, I know now! You're a thinking of Nancy and Peggy! Don't be afeard, Hannah! They won't do, nor say, nor even so much as *look* anything to hurt your feelings! and they had better not, if they know which side their bread is buttered! I am the master of my own house, I reckon, poor as it is! And my wife will be the mistress; and my sisters must keep their proper places! Come, Hannah! come, my darling, what do you say to me?" he whispered, putting his arm over her shoulders, while he tried to draw the apron from her face.

She dropped the apron, lifted her face, looked at him through her falling tears, and answered:

"This is what I have to say to you, dear, dearest, best loved Reuben! I feel your goodness in the very depths of my heart; I thank you with all my soul; I will love you—you only—in silence and in solitude, all my life; I will pray for you daily and nightly; but——" she stopped and sobbed.

"But——" said Reuben, breathlessly.

"I will never carry myself and my dishonor under your honest roof."

Reuben caught his suspended breath with a sharp gasp, and gazed in blank dismay upon the sobbing woman for a few minutes, and then he said:

"Hannah—oh my Lord! Hannah, you never mean to say that you won't marry me?"

"I mean just that, Reuben."

"Oh, Hannah, what have I done to offend you? I never meant to do it! I don't even know how I've done it! I'm such a blundering animal! But tell me what it is, and I will beg your pardon!"

"It is nothing, you good, true heart! nothing! But you have two sisters——"

"There, I knew it! It's Nancy and Peggy! They've been doing something to hurt your feelings! Well, Hannah, they shall come here and ask your forgiveness, or else they shall leave my home and go to earn their living in somebody's kitchin! I've been a father to them gals; but I won't suffer them to insult my own dear Hannah!" burst forth Reuben, indignantly.

"Dear Reuben, you are totally mistaken! Your sisters no more than yourself have ever given me the least cause of offence. They could not, dear Reuben. They must be good girls, being your sisters."

"Well, if neither I nor my sisters have hurt your feelings, Hannah, what in the name of sense did you mean by saying—(I hate even to repeat the words)—that you would not marry me?"

"Reuben, reproach has fallen upon my name—undeserved indeed, but not the less severe. You have young, unmarried sisters, with nothing but their good names to take them through the world. For their sakes, dear, you must not marry me and my reproach!"

"Is *that* all you mean, Hannah?"

"All."

"Then I *will* marry you!"

"Reuben, you must give me up."

"I won't, I say! So, there, now."

"Dear Reuben, I value your affection, more than I do anything in this world except duty; but I cannot permit you to sacrifice yourself to me," said Hannah, struggling hard to repress the sobs that were again rising in her bosom.

"Hannah, I begin to think you want to drive me crazy or break my heart! What sacrifice would it be for me to marry you and adopt that poor child? The only sacrifice I can think of would be to give you up! But I won't do it! no! I won't for nyther man nor mortal! You promised to marry me, Hannah, and I won't free your promise! but I will keep you to it, and marry you, if I die for it!" grimly persisted Reuben Grey.

And before she could reply, they were interrupted by a knock at the door.

"Come in!" said Hannah, expecting to see Mrs. Jones, or some other humble neighbor.

The door was pushed gently open, and a woman of exceeding beauty stood upon the threshold.

Her slender but elegant form was clothed in the deepest mourning; her pale, delicate face was shaded by the blackest ringlets; her large, dark eyes were fixed with the saddest interest upon the face of Hannah Worth.

Hannah arose in great surprise to meet her.

"You are Miss Worth, I suppose?" said the young stranger, in a soft voice.

"Yes, Miss; what is your will with me?"

"I am the Countess of Hurstmonceaux. Will you let me rest here a little while?" she asked, with a sweet smile.

Hannah gazed at the speaker in the utmost astonishment, forgetting to answer her question, or offer a seat, or even to shut the door, through which the wintry wind was blowing fiercely.

What! was *this* beautiful pale young creature the Countess of Hurstmonceaux, the rival of Nora, the wife of Herman Brudenell, the "bad, artful woman" who had entrapped the young Oxonian into a discreditable marriage? Impossible!

While Hannah stood thus dumb-foundered before the visitor, Reuben came forward with rude courtesy, closed the door, placed a chair before the fire, and invited the young lady to be seated.

The Countess, with a gentle bow of thanks, passed on, sank into the chair, and let her sable furs slip from her shoulders in a drift around her feet.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

MAN'S PREROGATIVE.

The old friar who had taught him in his boyhood, had often explained to him that men were surpassed by the bee in skill, and by the dog in loyalty, by the ant in industry, by the elephant in strength, and by the ape in nimble mimicry; the parrot learns to speak, and the bull bows under the yoke no less than man. What, then, proves the superiority of man—what marks his difference from the beasts? nothing else than that he may be taught to borrow. The exclusive prerogative of man is to incur debts. The friar was looked up to by his friends as a learned man, and he often used to say to those who attentively listened to him: "A day will come when the truth of this distinction will generally be acknowledged, when civilization will be tested by the use the nations make of this greatest human prerogative—their credit; when the communities which have no debt will be called barbarians, and those will be the most powerful rulers of mankind, the missionaries to carry civilization all over the world, who have the largest national debt; though there will always be narrow-minded fools to preach financial reform, unaware of the constitution of mankind, and of their glorious privilege."

GOLD.

A man who is furnished with arguments from the mint will convince his antagonist much sooner than one who draws them from reason and philosophy. Gold is a wonderful clearer of the understanding; it dissipates every doubt and scruple in an instant; accommodates itself to the meanest capacities; silences the loud and clamorous, and brings over the most obstinate and inflexible. Philip of Macedon was a man of most invincible reason this way. He refuted by it all the wisdom of Athens, confounded their statesmen, struck their orators dumb, and at length argued them out of all their liberties.

BETWEEN CUP AND LIP.

MY STRAWBERRY EXPEDITION.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

There was a tap at the door as I sat writing, and the servant came in to say that Mrs. Lord was in the parlor, and had asked for me. Mrs. Lord was the clergyman's wife, and since my long visit in A. had commenced, I had found no truer stranger-friends there than she and her excellent husband. So, though I might have been vexed at an interruption from any other person, I very willingly laid aside my pen and went down to see her.

"You know we are to have a festival to-morrow evening, in aid of our church," Mrs. Lord said, after compliments were exchanged.

I assented. I had heard rumors of a "strawberry festival."

"Mr. Lord is going to Tiverton this afternoon, to order the strawberries. Rose and Robin will go with him, and as there is room in the carriage for another, I said I would come and see if you would not like to ride over the prairie. It is but ten miles, you know, and you will be home long before dark," said Mrs. Lord. "Will you go?"

Nothing could have pleased me better, and with cordial thanks I accepted the invitation. And after an early dinner Mr. Lord came with the carriage and his two pretty children, and we set out.

The heat was intense, but no sooner had we emerged from the streets upon the open prairie, than we were refreshed by a pleasant breeze. Soon we came to high bluffs, which we surmounted by a winding road that gave us many glimpses of the river, winding along its bed a mile below, and the opposite bottom with the tall cottonwood trees thickly studding it, now in their greenest summer dress; and the bluff beyond, where the busy coal-miners swarmed like ants.

We came then to high rolling prairie, much of it under cultivation, with here and there a grove of stately trees rising like a green island out of the many-tinted expanse. The grain-fields were already turning yellow, but the maize and sorghum were still in their freshest verdure, and, to my eastern eyes, assuming gigantic proportions. Between great fields of these, extending far almost as the eye could reach, our road wound, and I listened to the solemn rustle of their long ribband-shaped leaves, not pleasant and musical like the patter of forest leaves, but having a sharp metallic clang like the distant clash of steel.

Then we crossed one of the islands of verdure, beneath the shade of giant oaks, whose foliage glistened in the sun, every polished leaf scintillating green rays, that tinted the golden gloom beneath.

At the highest point of the prairie, the view was more beautiful than I ever hoped to behold in this region, that impressed me almost painfully by its grand monotony. The eye ranged over a distance of ten miles. A haze, vague and dim as at times seems the veil that divides us from eternity, lay along the horizon line. It seemed, like that, to shroud a vast mystery, something that at once attracted and appalled. I have never been out of sight of land, but I fancy the sensation produced by looking over that vast slightly undulating surface was similar to that produced by the great solitude of sea and sky. Here was only sky above and that verdurous sea below, from which green islands rose, and whose bosom was dotted by scattered farm-houses, as ships dot the expanse of the ocean.

As we rode on we passed handsome, villa-like residences, embowered in trees and shrubbery, with every evidence that thrift and wealth had gone hand-in-hand with a refined taste. While other substantial farm-houses stood out bare and grim, with great unshaded windows blinking in the sun like fiery eyes, no tree nor shrub near them, no stately barns nor comfortable-looking sheds near them—just a shelter for the humanity of the farm. Here was wealth, and here might have been comfort, if comfort were a thing comprehended by the dwellers upon these fertile acres. Other homes there were, poor and squalid, such as show always the shadowed side of human nature—wretched homes where pauperism, and inebriety, and hopeless, thriftless indolence hide themselves and their brutal instincts, as the wild beast does in his lair. They seemed strangely out of place upon these teeming prairies, where the primeval curse loses half its significance amidst the light toil which only is needed to win bread from the unreluctant bosom of the earth.

And so we rode on. In full enjoyment of the refreshing breeze, the beauty of the scene, the sense of luxurious plenty which the bounteous affluence of the soil suggested, the smiling, yet treacherous calm of the summer sky, and listening to the sweet prattle of little Rose and Robin, or engaged in pleasant conversation, the road was quickly passed over. Almost before I had thought half the distance passed, Mr. Lord suddenly exclaimed, "Yonder lies Tiverton," and I saw before me the scattered buildings of a Western village, or, as it should perhaps be designated in harmony with the expansiveness of Occidental ideas, a city.

An immense wooden hotel; a pretentious public square, or park containing a few scrubby trees, on the leaves of which the wandering cattle browsed, or against which they rubbed their shaggy sides; a very few good houses embosomed in orchards and shrubbery, and many smaller ones quite overloaded with ornament, as if thus to make up for their deficiency in size and comfort; three or four shabby tumble-down meeting-houses, and as many stores filled with miscellaneous goods; these constituted the city.

Little Rose was left at the house of a friend, where I found it was expected that she would remain a few days. Then we drove on, crossed the stream by a pretty bridge, circled the public square, viewed the imposing front of the hotel, and finally drew up before a handsome brick house, with beautiful grounds filled with fine shrubbery and trees, and gay with a wondrous variety of summer flowers.

The lady of the house, a pleasant middle-aged matron, came out to meet us in cordial western fashion. She invited us to alight, and enter. Mr. Lord said he had hoped she would accompany us to the strawberry farm, which lay just beyond. But, on her replying that she could not leave home for a half hour or more, or until her children returned from school, it was settled that I should remain with her until she was at liberty to walk over with me; while Mr. Lord proceeded with the carriage, and attended to the business which brought him there.

So, presently, refreshed by cool water, and towels, I sat down in a handsomely furnished parlor, to a very pleasant conversation with my hostess, whom I found to be a very intelligent woman, and surrounded by an interesting family of young people of all ages. The husband and father was absent in Washington, where he held a lucrative official position connected with the Government. Mrs. M. managed the farm and the household, and beautified her lonely home.

Sitting there in that shaded room, I had not observed the change that had come over the aspect of the day. The half hour passed away, and then the young people came in, rushing with merry shouts, pursued by the pattering feet of a summer shower. The heavens grew darker, the thunder rolled, the quick lightning flashed in awful grandeur. One of those fierce sudden storms common to warm prairie countries had arisen. There could be no thought of leaving our present shelter, nor could we safely return home, though ours was a close carriage, until its fury was spent.

An hour passed on. The thunder passed away. The rain ceased, and the sun shone out once more in a nearly cloudless sky, athwart which gleamed a radiant rainbow. But, strangely enough, Mr. Lord did not return, though it was fully time that we set out for home.

And then another hour or more fled away. Pleasant conversation could only control the outward expression of my impatience and uneasiness. I remembered the ten miles of clay road we must traverse, now so gullied by the rain as to be dangerous after dark. And so I sat and watched the declining sun, trembling and wondering at Mr. Lord's delay.

At last he came. It was nearly seven o'clock, but he had been obliged to wait for the berries to be picked, and, as they could not be sent in the next day, the carriage had been loaded with them, the back seat and all the interior of the carriage was lumbered with the boxes. Mr. Lord, little Robin and I must sit as we could on the front seat, or would I remain, Mr. Lord suggested, with Mrs. M., until the next morning, when he would come and fetch me home. I fancied, perhaps I was wrong, that Mrs. M. did not give a cordial assent to this suggestion. At all events, I could not think of intruding thus upon a stranger-household. So I resolved to return that night, hoping that the storm would not be renewed, though threatening clouds lowered in the south-west, and contradicted the peaceful assurance of the serene eastern sky athwart whose depths of golden azure the sun was still shining brilliantly.

I was disappointed at losing sight of the great strawberry-farm, vexed at the delay, and irritated no little by the inconvenience to which the loading of the carriage with berries consigned me; therefore in no good humor to meet the further trials and discomforts that lay before me. But I said a cheerful good-bye to my hospitable entertainers, and we set out on our return homeward.

But alas! we had not proceeded a mile upon our homeward way, when the sudden patter of the rain told us of a coming storm. Out of the inky blackness of the cloud before us, suddenly leaped a blinding flash of lightning—another, and another—until the sudden darkness that had fallen was lighted almost continually with the lurid glare.

Faster and faster fell the torrents of rain. Suddenly, with a roar and a crash indescribable, enormous hail fell upon the carriage, all about us, even into our faces. The horses reared in affright under the stinging smart, and Mr. Lord only by reining them suddenly out of the road, where a high fence opposed their further progress, kept control of them, and interposed the shelter of the side of the carriage between us and the blinding, bruising storm.

As suddenly as it came the hail-storm passed away. The lightning still faintly flashed, and the thunder was only heard in distant mutterings. Overhead the serene sky again appeared, and we drove on.

With my ignorance of western storms I thought the danger past, and though thoroughly wetted and uncomfortable, I regained my cheerfulness. We approached a handsome villa, whose residents were well known to Mr. Lord, and he proposed that we should seek shelter there for the night. "He did not think it would rain more—it might not, but the roads would be bad, and," he added, "I must be so very uncomfortable."

I thought of my miserably wet and draggled plight, and could not endure the thought of appearing before strangers, evidently people of taste and refinement, in such a condition. If Mr. Lord thought it possible for us to reach home in safety, I said, I should prefer to go on. I could not be more uncomfortable than I already was, and if the storm were really over, we could yet reach A. by the lingering light of the long summer day. Had I known!—— but before the morning light I vowed that if ever I should be caught in such a storm again, on a western prairie, I would yield readily to the advice of those more experienced than myself.

We drove on past the friendly shelter which would surely have opened to us there, and quickly passed over two or three miles of the muddy road. Then the storm broke out again, more violent, if that were possible, than before. With it fell sudden darkness, dense but for the glare of the lightning. In an instant we were again drenched. The scene was awful. The frightened horses were with difficulty controlled, but kept the road by their own instinct, I suppose. In the momentary glare we saw houses, islands of trees, and the narrow white line of the road, then the awful gloom would shut down upon us. Mr. Lord groaned, little Robin wept and shrieked in affright. I wisely kept silent, bewailing inwardly the folly which had rejected a shelter, and trembling at the danger that menaced us.

"Here is a farmhouse," said Mr. Lord, at last. "I do not know who lives in it, but it has at least an appearance of respectability. It is impossible to go on. We must seek shelter here."

And now I submitted, without a word. Thoroughly frightened, I would have rejoiced to find myself in the meanest hovel.

Mr. Lord took little Robin and myself from the carriage. He directed me to go to the house, which stood some distance from the road, and from which a friendly voice had already assured him that he could have shelter. Holding the frightened child by the hand, I went up the muddy path to the inner gate. There were hoarse voices heard from the porch, and a huge dog sprung upon us with violent barkings as we approached. But somebody called him off, and we went in.

Five or six men sat upon the porch; one of them was lazily lighting a lantern and preparing to go to Mr. Lord's assistance. I entered the kitchen. A tidy-looking German woman and two girls received me, cordially enough, so far as I could judge from their looks and gestures. I could not understand their speech very well, and they had equal difficulty with me.

They saw that I was wet and cold, however, and kindled their fire to a warmer blaze, took off my dripping cloak and hung it up to dry, set the child where his feet could rest on the hearth of the stove, and made us as comfortable as possible.

Presently Mr. Lord came in. The horses and the carriage, he said, were safely housed in the barn. He could converse a little with the pleasant-faced woman, and soon obtained from her a promise of supper and beds.

Meanwhile the storm continued, if possible becoming more violent. The thunder roared and reverberated all around the sky, the awful glare still lit up the intense, almost palpable darkness without.

The hoarse voices whispered and murmured upon the porch. By the weird light the men wore a savage look. I feared them. My terror grew, I would have preferred to sit all night by the kitchen fire, ready to rush out into the storm and darkness, at the first premonition of danger. But Mr. Lord had induced the woman to prepare me a bed, and after we had vainly tried to eat the somewhat profuse but strange looking supper she provided, she came with a light and indicated that she would show me to it. Mr. Lord guessed something of my terror, and told me that he and Robin would be in the adjoining room, and I need fear nothing.

But I could not divest myself of fear of these people. Their voices, so harsh and strangely guttural, their savage looks, and uncouth manners, seen through the influence of previous fright and present discomfort, had thrilled me with terror. I threw myself upon the soft and clean bed, in the bare uncarpeted room, of which it and a chair formed the only furniture, but without removing any of my clothing. Presently I heard Mr. Lord and his little son enter the next room, listened to the father's earnest prayer, and to the child's simple petition. In a little time their voices subsided, and I supposed they slept. Their devotions had served to quiet my own mind, and I, too, might have slept, had not a loud, mingled noise, from a room adjoining mine on the other side, and separated from it only by a partition of loose boards, aroused me. There was the tramp of heavy feet, and the hoarse voices and uncouth guttural accents I had heard from the porch. All my terror returned. Those ruffians near me, sleep was impossible. At any moment they might enter my room. I had my watch, some jewelry, and a considerable sum of money—enough perhaps to induce them to rob and murder me.

The storm still continued in all its violence. This, doubtless, added to my terror, and I passed the entire night in a state of trembling fear, listening to every sound, and at every movement in the next room expecting my doom.

How glad and grateful I was when the early summer dawn appeared! The rain still fell heavily, and the morning broke cloudy and drear. But at last it was day, and half my terrors fled before it.

How I watched and waited for its advance! How glad I was when the heavy feet and voices left the next room. A few moments' fitful slumber followed, I think, and then I heard Mr. Lord speak to his little son, and knew, by the sounds, that father and child were rising. In a little time more Mr. Lord tapped at my door to tell me that, the rain having abated, he would be ready to leave for home very soon, and I very gladly prepared myself.

Going again to the kitchen I passed through the porch, again occupied by the group of last night. I smiled then at the unfounded terrors from which I had suffered. Rough, but with kindly faces, these rude men had no terrors for me now. Their awkward obeisance was courteous, at least, and there was something honest and cordial in their coarse German faces, which were far from being repulsive.

The kindly old lady and her daughters came round me to shake hands, with smiles upon their faces. Theirs had been no grudging hospitality, and early as the hour was, they urged upon me a steaming cup of fragrant coffee. And I bade them farewell with many thanks, which they reiterated by boundless German compliments, equally unintelligible. The carriage was at the door. We entered, and found our three mile drive neither quite safe nor pleasant, but soon over, when I, and my friends also, were glad to reach the safe shelter of our homes. The adventure was sadly disagreeable at the time, but now I look back upon it seeing only its ludicrous lights, and laughing at myself for all my causeless terrors, as heartily as any one else can.

So many a time we wander forth over the broad, pleasant plains of life, seeking pleasure, and finding only sorrow and chagrin. And then how gladly we come back to the safe shelter and the loving hearts we have forsaken. God help those who wander evermore—whom no home lures, no heart loves!

WARP AND WEFT;
OR,
THE COTTON FAMINE.

A TALE OF MANCHESTER LIFE.

BY J. F. SMITH,

AUTHOR OF "THE SOLDIER OF FORTUNE," "DICK TARLETON," "THE STEP MOTHER," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Vain honor! Thou art but a disguise,
A cheating voice, a juggling art;
No judge of virtue, whose pure eyes
Loves her own image in her heart;
More pleased with her true figure there
Than her false echo in the air.
CAREW.

Although our readers, for some time past, have lost sight of Willie Hannan—the poor, self-taught boy, whose genius and friendship had been so cruelly abused—we trust they have not lost all interest in his fortunes. Trust! did we say—we are sure they have not. There are certain honest, healthy sympathies in our nature that will assert themselves. Humanity, after all, is much better than cynics and some would-be philosophers describe it. If, like the canvas of the old Flemish painter, it has certain black, mysterious shades, it possesses also many of his sunny, startling lights—bright gleams of moral sunshine that redeem the picture.

The world would indeed be a desert if all men were hollow and heartless, like John Bentley; and even he had his moments of regret. Few natures are entirely of clay.

There were three persons in Manchester who looked forward to Willie's return impatiently; first, his widowed mother—all can understand her feelings; next, the false friend, anxious to learn how far his treachery had been discovered, or was suspected; and lastly, Michael Haman, who hoped to make him an instrument of his revenge upon the man he so bitterly and perseveringly hated.

"Tha'rt come to a sad home, my dear, dear boy!" exclaimed the widow, throwing her arms around him, and trying to smile through her tears. "Bessie be gone, and Sam be gone; I've only thee left in my old age to comfort me."

"They will return again, mother," replied her son, kissing her affectionately, "and we shall be happy as before."

Mrs. Hannan shook her head doubtfully.

"My prospects are brighter than ever."

"It beant that, Willie darlin'," replied his parent. "Thanks to thee, I ain't known want. It's the heart that be wrung," she added, pressing her hand to her side. "Let me look at thee. Lord be praised! how handsome and strong thee beest grown—quite a man, I declare—and whiskers, too! Thee brother Sam said thah would never have any."

Willie smiled.

"But I knowed better—thah father had um. But what'll thee take? Tha'rt cold and hungry enough, I warrant, coming over the sea!"

"I am neither cold nor hungry," answered the young man, with a sigh; for the reflection struck him how happy his return to England might have been had Bessie, Sam, and the friend whom as yet he would not doubt been there to welcome him.

"Aye, lad, it be desolate enough," said the widow, interpreting his thought; "but it will be cheerfuller now. The sight o' thah is like summer come agin. There will be plenty o' friends to gi' thah a hearty welcome when they hear tha'rt come back."

"Mother," replied Willie, placing his hand upon her arm to give weight to his words, "I do not wish any one to know of my return for a day or two."

"What be that for?"

"I have inquiries to make—doubts to clear up."

The widow asked no further questions.

As yet the name of John Bentley had not passed the lips of either of the speakers. Willie was the first to mention it.

"Aye," said Mrs. Hannan, trying to assume a tone of indifference, "he be a great man now—married to the daughter o' the master—a partner in the mill—a very great man be John Bentley; but I'd rather he nor thee."

"Why so, mother?"

"I be satisfied wi' thee as thah art," was the evasive reply.

"There is a mystery in this I cannot fathom," exclaimed her son—"a mystery you must explain to me: Bessie's marriage! her departure for America to join her husband! Surely she might have waited a week or two for my return. Has Walter Glyde," he added, "acted like a villain to her?"

"No, Willie, darlin'," exclaimed the widow, eagerly. "Wi' all his faults—and God knows the poor lad had many—he behaved like a man."

"And he—you know whom I would name?"

"Dunna ask me," said his mother, wringing her hands—"dunna ask me. I gi'ed my word not to tell; and Bessie is my child, after all, as much as thah art."

The poor fellow asked no further questions. He was answered. Hiding his face in his hands, he wept bitterly.

"Dunna, Willie—dunna," sobbed Mrs. Hannan; "it wrings my poor old heart to see thah. Besides, it wor not my fault."

"I am sure of that."

"And what be the use o' tears?"

"Right—you are right. This weakness is unworthy of manhood. Yet you would not wonder at it if you knew how I loved and trusted him. I can believe all now."

"What can'st thah believe, lad?"

Her son made no reply.

"Remember, I ha' said nothing."

Willie made no reply, but smiled bitterly.

The last allusion was not to the base conduct of his false friend to the sister he had confided to his care as to a brother's guardianship, but to the letters he had received from Michael Haman, exposing Bentley's treachery in the purchase of the patent. At first he disbelieved them; but proofs upon proofs were forced on his mind, till he began to doubt.

It was these letters, rather than the offers they contained, which decided him, despite the advice and wishes of Schwartz and Company, to return at once to England.

It was, in truth, a joyless welcome. Sorrow and disappointment, the consciousness, also, of disgrace, met him on the threshold of his once happy home. Desolation sat beside him at the hearth; he missed the kiss, the sunny smile of his sister; the rough, warm pressure of his brother's honest hand. True, the love of his mother was unchanged; and the love of a mother is a balm for many wounds, but not for all.

The widow would fain have arranged their solitary dinner in the little parlor where he had passed so many happy hours with John Bentley, discussing their future plans, his unsuspecting nature filled with confidence and hope.

"Not there," he said; "not there."

"As thah please, lad; as thah please."

The heart of his mother comprehended him.

On the following morning, long before the hour of Mr. Haman or his son-in-law's visit to the mill, Willie presented himself at the counting-house, and requested to speak with the overseer.

"Welcome back again!" said the latter, shaking cordially by the hand the man he had known as a boy—"welcome back! Mr. Bentley will be delighted to see you."

The visitor made no reply.

"Great changes since you were here," added the speaker; "but of course you have heard of Miss Mary's marriage with your friend?"

"He wrote to inform me."

"No doubt, no doubt; he is a partner, now. Shall I send one of the hands to let him know that you are here?"

"No."

The overseer looked surprised.

"It is too early to disturb him," added Willie. "I came because I wished to have a look at the old place again, and shake some of my old friends by the hand."

"They will be delighted to see you," observed the man. "We often speak of you in the mill."

"I have another motive."

"I know."

"I wish to see the carding machine."

"See it, and welcome," replied the overseer. "There is no mystery—the invention is patented—the cleverest thing brought out in my time. You are aware, I suppose, that Mr. Bentley has bought it?"

"Perfectly aware of it," answered Willie.

"He was only agent at first. But come this way. There is a model of it in the inner office; you can examine it at your leisure there."

The young man followed the speaker, and remained for nearly an hour examining the machine in all its detail. His quick, experienced eye detected in a very few instants the colorable alterations which had been made—alterations which disguised, without changing the principle of the invention. He was fully, painfully satisfied.

"They say in the mill," observed the overseer, who accompanied him to the gate on his departure, "that you had something to do with the invention."

"*Something*," repeated Willie, with a bitter smile.

"And that a great London engineer perfected it."

"Did you hear his name?"

"No. Mr. Haman could not even tell it," replied the man. "He was mentioning the circumstance only a few days since to a gentleman who came to take out a licence for using it, and expressed his regret at your not having reaped all the advantages you deserved."

"Mr. Haman is an honest man," said Willie, emphatically.

"Of course he is. Not a better in Manchester."

"Would others were like him!"

With these words the speaker took his leave, his generous heart more pained by the conviction that the man he had trusted as a brother had meanly deprived him of the fame due to the invention, than by the material loss.

The last was a secondary consideration.

When, in the course of the day, the worthy cotton-spinner and his son-in-law arrived at the mill, the former was greatly surprised to hear that Willie had already been there before them. He regarded his companion, who shrugged his shoulders, as if he, too, was at a loss to comprehend it.

"Did he leave no message?" asked Mr. Haman.

"No, sir."

"For Mr. Bentley, I mean."

"None whatever, sir."

"Humph!" muttered his employer.

As Miss Westbury once observed, the word meant more than it expressed from the lips of the speaker. Evidently he felt dissatisfied.

"He came early to see the mill," observed the overseer; "to see the carding machine."

John Bentley colored to the temples.

"You showed it him, of course?" said Mr. Haman.

"I did sir."

"You were wrong to do so without permission," observed his partner, harshly.

"Not to Willie?" said his father-in-law, mildly. "Poor fellow! I can comprehend his disappointment. Do you know, John, I have not yet forgiven myself the opinion I expressed at the time you applied to me. I see the whole affair in a different light since. I ought to have given him time—furnished him with means. It required so little to perfect his invention."

"But that little was important," remarked the hypocrite.

"True," replied the cotton-spinner, "true; still, we must do something for him."

To this last observation John Bentley expressed his willing assent. Like most men who by unscrupulous means have arrived at fortune, he began to feel now the value of reputation.

It was exactly mid-day when Michael Haman rung the bell for his senior clerk, and directed him to admit no one but his lawyer and the gentleman who accompanied him.

"Not Hare and Hind?" asked the man.

"Not any one," replied the old man, sharply. "Are not my words sufficiently precise? The order admits of no exception. Mr. Barnes," he continued, peering at him with his small, grey eyes, "I am not in the habit of repeating my directions—causes loss of time, as well as a waste of breath. I expect to be obeyed literally, and without observation. You understand me?"

"Perfectly, sir."

"That will do."

Half an hour afterwards, Willie and Mr. Warrens, one of the most eminent legal practitioners in Manchester, were ushered into the counting-house. Michael held out his hand to the former, who shook it coldly. Strange to say, he felt something akin to repulsion towards the man who had unmasked the falsehood of his friend—destroyed one of the sweetest illusions of existence, confidence in his fellow-creatures.

Michael smiled, but took no other notice.

"These are the papers," he said, producing a packet, tied closely together, from the iron safe. "We had best proceed regularly."

"Certainly," replied the lawyer. "Nothing like regularity in business."

"I only require one proof," observed Willie; "the letter which you spoke of from Mr. Bentley to Bartlett, directing him to meet him at Chapel-en-le-Frith."

"You will find it marked number three," said Michael Haman.

The man of law drew it from the packet, and handed it to the young man, who read it twice, and then returned it without a word.

"Have you any doubt of the handwriting?" inquired the father of Alice.

"None, sir."

"Examine the post-mark."

"It is quite unnecessary. I was almost convinced," replied the young man, "before I saw it."

After a lengthened examination of the papers, Mr. Warrens suggested two courses to be taken.

"The first," he said, "is to attack the original sale, as having been procured through fraud."

"Fraud!" repeated Willie. "Yes, that is the word. Fraud."

"There is only one danger attending it in the event of success."

"What is that?"

"The validity of the patent may be disputed," replied the lawyer.

"The other course?" asked Michael Haman, quietly.

"To file a bill in Chancery, calling on John Bentley to give up the patent on the repayment of the sums advanced by him to the original holder, Bartlett."

"I prefer the former proceeding," said Willie, firmly. "It will place the transaction in its true light; show him to the world, the treacherous villain that he is!"

"You forget the risk," suggested Mr. Warrens.

"I will bear that," observed the old man, calmly. "Is there any reason," he added, "why we should not try both proceedings?"

"Only the expense."

To Michael Haman that was no consideration. His wealth was almost a burden to him. It had increased immensely since he had settled in Manchester; everything he touched appeared to turn to gold. There was a mocking as well as a poetic justice in his punishment—he no longer felt delight in it.

"Have you any witnesses?" urged the lawyer.

"I fear not, sir."

"You forget; there is one, at least."

Willie regarded the old man with surprise.

"Blind John," said the ex-money-scrivener.

"And what can he prove?" demanded the young man.

"The co-partnership in the idea; the working it out together. Strange, is it not, that I should have ferreted it out? But you know not how active injury can make us."

Poor Willie was already beginning to feel it.

Accompanied by Mr. Warrens, the deceived and outraged friend—outraged in all that was most dear to him—hastened to the lodgings of the musician in Deansgate. John dropped the fiddle the instant he recognized his footstep upon the stairs.

"God be wi' thah, lad; God be wi' thah. Thar't come back ag'in. I knew thah would, I knew thah would; summut told me I should *see* thah ag'in. I often dreamt on thah."

Blind John frequently spoke of seeing his friends.

"But who be it wi' thah, lad? It beant *him*—I should ha' knowed his step."

"Who does he mean by 'him'?" whispered the lawyer.

"Mr. Bentley," whispered Willie.

"What art thah mutterin' on?" asked the musician, sharply.

"I told the gentleman that you were speaking of Mr. Bentley."

"Aye, aye; he be a rich man now, thanks to somebody as I knows; but thah'll find him out in time."

"You have not got over your former prejudice," observed the young man.

"My what?"

"Your dislike."

"Why don't 'ee speak plain and homely like, that a poor fellow can understand 'ee?" said old John, in a querulous tone. "Got over it!—no—I can't get over it. I never liked um—never liked his voice—it worn't open and honest like—spoke in a false key. But there, I ha' done. Tha'rt blinder nor I.

"Thah'll find um out in time," he added.

"You saw clearer than I did," answered Willie, with a sigh, "although your eyes are closed."

"Eh! What?"

"I have been cruelly deceived."

"I knowed it."

"And robbed of my fair share of the credit due to our invention."

"It wor all thah own, lad—all thah own!" exclaimed the blind man, greatly excited. "Didn't I listen night after night to every word that passed betwixt ye! It wor thah as thought o' puttin' the cards all one way."

"If we could only prove that!" said Mr. Warrens.

"Who spoke?"

"My lawyer, John," replied the young man, "who has called with me in the hope of gleaning something that may enable me to do myself justice."

"A lawyer!" repeated the old musician, distastefully. "Well," he added, after a pause, "I s'pose they are necessary in the world. More the pity. No offence to you, sir. You may be an honest man. I ha' heard that some are honest."

"I trust so," said the gentleman.

"And, Willie, thah wants to prove that it wor thah as first thought o' puttin' the cards all one way?"

"It is most important."

"I'll prove it for 'ee, lad."

"You?"

"I, lad. I ha' gotten all my senses about me."

The speaker fumbled in his pocket till he found the key which opened one of the cupboards in his room, which he opened, drew forth an old paper hat-box, and placed it carefully upon the table.

"What have you there?"

"The proof, lad. The proof," said the blind man, in a tone of triumph. "Every night, after thah and thah friend—pretty friend!—went away, I used to go upon my knees, creep along the floor, and pick up every bit o' card that had fallen—hunt all the sweepin's. I knowed as they would be useful one day, and there they all are. No one has seen or touched 'um."

At this proof of the poor old fellow's regard for him, the eyes of Willie filled with tears; a choking sensation rose in his throat, and impeded his words.

"All right, Willie, lad," said the speaker, holding out his hand to him. "I knowed thah father, and weren't agoin' to see thah robbed by that fine Lononer. There be the bits o' cards, sweepin's and all; take 'em, and God bless 'ee."

"Stay," said the lawyer, as his client was about to open the hat-box. "Do not open it; it must be produced untouched in court."

"I understand you."

"We shall require his evidence."

"I'll gi' it, lad, and honestly, too," exclaimed Blind John, greatly excited. "I'll tell the judges a bit o' my mind. I beant in the least afeard on 'um—why should I?"

Why, indeed! His life had been blameless, as it was humble and unfortunate.

By Mr. Warrens' direction, he replaced the hat-box carefully in the cupboard, and put the key in his pocket.

"Mind and not part with it on any pretence," said the lawyer.

"I'd like to hear the tongue as 'ud wheedle me out on it," was the answer.

His visitors could not help smiling at his naive but honest expressions.

"To morrow we will come with witnesses, and place seals upon it," added the legal adviser of Michael Haman.

"Thah must come wi' um, Willie," observed the musician, firmly; "thah must come wi' um. No one shall touch it till thah art by."

Having consented to this arrangement, his visitors took their leave.

"I knowed it 'ud come to this at last. I foreseed it," muttered the old man, as he took up his fiddle. "Didn't I, old lass?"—this was addressed to the instrument. "Tha'rt as good as eyes to me, and better, for thah can't deceive me if thah tried."

He drew the bow across the strings, and produced a full, rich sound.

"That be the true, honest voice," he said, nodding, and smiling to himself.

"And that the dishonest one," he added, producing a slight discord.

"The Lonnoner pitched his voice just like that—allays on a half-note, and below the line, too! I knowed from the first there wor no good in um."

It was a singular method, perhaps, of judging the moral character of any one; but we have known opinions formed, likes and dislikes taken, on grounds quite as slender. We remember the unrivalled Malibran once justifying her distaste of a person's society by saying that he always spoke in a false key.

On his return home, Willie found a servant waiting with a note from John Bentley, congratulating him on his return to England, and complaining that he had not seen him.

The answer was short and almost epigrammatic:

"Honor is the soul of friendship. The soul having fled, let us bury the worthless carcass."

"Michael Haman has been beforehand with me," thought the hypocrite, as he read it.

He divined instinctively the hand that dealt the blow.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Thou may'st from law, but not from scorn escape;
The pointed finger, cold averted eye—
Insulted virtue's hiss—thou cans't not fly. SPRAGUE.

On their way from the humble lodgings of Blind John, the lawyer and his client had to pass the shop of the Jew. The owner saw them coming, and recognized the latter at a distance.

"In Manchester again!" he muttered. "Curse him!"

To avoid meeting him face to face, which doubtless he had some motive for shrinking from, the man concealed himself behind a piece of second-hand carpet, suspended against one of the door-posts.

Willie passed close to him, and stood for several instants examining the shop. A vast change had taken place. Rows of cheap watches and tawdry jewellery, mingled with articles of greater value, replaced the scanty stock with which it was first opened. He peered through the open door, and saw that the shelves were piled with cloth and bales of cotton goods.

"His trade has prospered," muttered the young man, half aloud.

"Do you allude to Norie?" asked Mr. Warrens.

"Yes. But I was not aware that his name was Norie."

"That is the one he goes by."

Willie smiled.

"The fellow has prospered," continued his companion; "and by the most dishonest means. The place is little better than a receiving-house, I believe, for stolen goods. He is training many for the prison, if not the gallows."

"Are you acquainted with him?" demanded his client, greatly surprised.

"Professionally," was the reply. "I lately sold him two houses that passed through my hands—an affair in bankruptcy. He pretends to be a German."

"Pretends!" repeated Willie.

"I use the word advisedly," said the lawyer. "One of my clerks spoke to him in the language; but the fellow is either an impostor or has forgotten his mother tongue."

"Perhaps I may one day address him in a language he has not forgotten," observed the young man as they resumed their way. "I have no time to attend to him now."

A pair of black, fierce, searching eyes followed him, and their owner muttered something about finding time to attend to him.

A female voice at the back of the shop was loud and bitter in imprecations.

Michael Haman no sooner perceived a chance of disgracing the man he hated, than he hastened to London to consult the most eminent lawyers of the day. He had an idea that it was possible to proceed against John Bentley criminally for conspiracy to defraud, and he laid his papers before the well-known Sergeant Blague.

A consultation followed.

"One thing is necessary," observed that great authority.

"Money?" asked the old man.

"That, of course."

"It shall not be wanting."

"But it was not money that I alluded to; your solicitor has informed me whom I have to deal with. Can you procure the consent of this William Hannan to the indictment?"

"I can."

"He is not a person to be bought off?"

"A million could not buy him."

The sergeant looked a little incredulous at this assertion. He had much experience in the ways of men, and doubted the existence of any virtue that such a sum would not purchase.

"I know him," added his client; "you do not."

"I know the world, unfortunately, Mr. Haman," was the reply.

"Possibly."

The learned advocate was struck by the calm confidence of the speaker, and mentally wondered whether it arose from knowledge of Willie's character, or a blind faith in human nature.

"Do you think," asked the old man, "that there is any chance of a conviction?"

"Doubtful," replied the sergeant. He had already pocketed an enormous fee, and could afford to give an honest opinion.

The father of Alice looked disappointed.

"But I can promise you one thing," continued the speaker; "his reputation as a man of honor will be irretrievably ruined. I speak not of honor in the refined sense of the word, as it is understood between gentlemen. His name will become a shame to those who bear it—a brand, a reproach.

"Never had a case, in my life," he added, "in which I felt I could be more eloquent. Blind witness, too! great point to be made of that."

The indictment for conspiracy was decided upon.

Michael Haman proved right in his conviction. Willie was not to be bought off. No sooner did John Bentley receive notice of the indictment having been preferred against him, than by the advice of his lawyers he attempted to settle the matter, and one of them waited upon the man his client had so deeply injured.

He spoke of their past friendship.

Willie smiled.

Of the disgrace to Mr. Haman.

Willie felt touched, but his resolution was unchanged.

Finally, the agent offered him the large sum of five thousand pounds.

It was declined.

"Name your price," said the lawyer, despairing of success.

"*I have no price, sir*," was the dignified reply.

The gentleman stared; he could not understand him.

"Mr. Bentley," he continued, "has wronged me, not only in my interests—I could look over that—but in a point so tender that I dare not trust myself to do more than allude to it. Tell him this; he will understand my resolution; it is unalterable."

Finding nothing was to be done by way of compromise, the agent, who protested that he had acted entirely upon his own suggestion, took his leave.

Great was the astonishment in Manchester when it first became rumored that John Bentley, the model man, the son-in-law of the wealthiest mill-owner in the place, was about *to be indicted for conspiracy to rob the real inventor of the carding machine of his fair share in the property. Many, at first, refused* to believe it.

"Can't be!" said one.

"His name so good upon 'Change!" suggested a second.

"So regular at church!"

"So liberal a subscriber to all the charities!"

The fact of the approaching trial at last became too well established to be disputed, and a general interest was excited. Men when they met spoke of little else. Two parties were formed in the town; one composed of the friends of Gilbert Haman—in a word, the most respectable class of mill-owners and manufacturers in Manchester; the other of those who envied the prosperity of his successful son-in-law.

The real merits of the case had little or nothing to do with their partizanship one way or the other. As yet they were unknown.

Gilbert Haman both felt and spoke most indignantly of the ingratitude of Willie, and the unnatural conduct of his brother Michael. Everywhere he told the tale of John Bentley's having refused the hand and fortune of his niece, and denounced the whole affair as a vile conspiracy entered into from a bitter feeling of revenge by her father.

As for the malice of the old man's conduct, he was right enough there.

On the day of trial, which was to have taken place at Lancaster, the counsel for the defendent produced a writ of *certiorari*, which removed the proceedings to the King's Bench, in London.

This gave John Bentley three or four weeks' more breathing time. He humbled himself even to soliciting a personal interview with the man he had wronged.

It was refused.

It was a sad trial for Mary, soon about once more to become a mother; but confidence in the honor of her husband sustained her. To her the mask was still impenetrable; the time for casting it aside had not come yet.

In this blind faith her aunt sustained her.

"You will write to me daily," said Mary, as she wept upon the shoulder of the deceiver on the eve of his departure for London, where her father was to accompany him.

John Bentley promised.

"And send me the first news of your—your victory."

She could not bring herself to pronounce the word acquittal; it appeared little less than sacrilege in her eyes to doubt the integrity of her husband.

"I will bring it myself, dearest love," was the reply.

John Bentley, whose interests were too deeply compromised to permit his being a careless observer, noticed as they rode to London that Gilbert Haman appeared moody and abstracted. It might have been nothing more than the annoyance caused by the circumstance under which they were journeying together; but guilt is always suspicious, and he felt self-tormented and uneasy.

To his attempts at conversation he could only procure brief, and sometimes impatient replies.

"Bear with me, John," said his father-in-law, at last, fearing that his son-in-law felt hurt at his answers; "but this affair has annoyed me greatly."

"It must have done so, sir."

"I could not—and do not still—understand the necessity of the *certiorari*," added the cotton-spinner, musingly.

"Nothing can be more simple than the motive."

"Perhaps you will explain it to me?"

"Willingly.

"Had the acquittal—which I scarcely need observe is inevitable—and the exposure of the malice and falsehood of my accusers, taken place in a remote country town, my enemies might not have been silenced, although my friends would have felt satisfied."

"Not more than we are now of your integrity," interrupted Gilbert Haman. "I, for one, at least, cannot feel more so."

The hypocrite listened to the assurance, which delighted him exceedingly, as if it were only a fit and proper testimony rendered to his virtue.

"By changing the venue to London, I silence the tongue of calumny," he added.

"Most true," said his father-in-law. "You have acted with prudence and consistency, as you always do. And I was weak enough to regret the delay! I perceive now it was necessary; but illness makes us fretful, and not unfrequently warps the judgment."

"Illness, my dear sir!"

"I would not give way to it before I left home, for fear of alarming Mary; but for this month past I have suffered from a continual gnawing pain just here."

The speaker placed his hand over the region of the heart.

"You must have advice," exclaimed John Bentley, with great apparent interest.

"The best advice I can have," replied the old man, forcing a smile, "will be the public confusion of those who have slandered you, and your honorable acquittal."

The acquittal was indeed pronounced, there being too many doubtful legal points to prevent it; but it was far from proving the honorable one the speaker anticipated. Sergeant Blague, in his address to the jury, showed himself almost sublime in his abuse—the withering scorn with which he painted the treachery of the false friend. Had a dozen vipers, with their poisonous fangs, been gnawing at his breast, John Bentley could not have endured more fearful pangs.

The first stage of retribution had overtaken him.

The jury acquitted him upon legal grounds, and legal grounds alone, expressing their regret that, after the law laid down by the judge, it was impossible for them to do otherwise. Every eye in the court was turned with an expression of contempt towards the spot where John Bentley and Mr. Haman were seated.

"Take me away," murmured the latter, pressing his hand to his side.

His son-in-law, fearing not the result, but the exposure which he knew must take place, had vainly attempted to persuade his father-in-law to remain at the hotel, under pretence of anxiety for his health; but the old man was not to be dissuaded from being present. He had determined to hear and judge for himself.

"Acquitted!" exclaimed Blind John, who, after giving his evidence with an amount of intelligence that carried conviction to all who listened to him, had remained close to the witness-box; "what! beant they agoin' to hang the villain?"

"Hush!" cried the clerks and officers of the court.

The judge pretended not to hear him.

"It be a burnin' shame. I only wish I wor judge, that's all."

This time it was impossible to pass over the interruption. Poor Blind John was brought before his lordship, and solemnly reproved.

It was with the utmost difficulty that Willie prevailed upon him not to argue the point with the judge.

"I bean't afeard on um, lad; I bean't afeard on um."

"Take me away," repeated Mr. Haman, on *whom every word that passed inflicted an additional pang of shame.*

John Bentley offered his arm to his father-in-law, without waiting to look at him. With all his self-possession, he feared to meet the gaze of an honest, upright man.

As they passed through the crowd, they suddenly found themselves face to face with Willie. His former employer recognized him, and feebly extended his hand.

The young man pressed it respectfully.

"It was not my fault," murmured the old man.

"I am sure it was not," replied the former, greatly moved; for the only pang, the only hesitation he had felt in bringing the charge against his false friend, arose from the thought of the shame it would inflict on the honored name of the cotton-spinner.

"Let us pass," said John Bentley, sternly.

"I will speak to him," exclaimed his father-in-law, withdrawing his arm from the hypocrite. "Cunning as you are, you have not succeeded in all your fine-spun schemes. I will do you justice, Willie; rely upon my word, I will do you justice, although the court denied it."

These were the last words Gilbert Haman ever spoke. He fell back, as he uttered them, dead in the arms of the man who had proved his destroyer. An inquest was held, and the surgeon declared that the deceased had suffered for years from an acute disease of the heart, that might have caused his death at any moment.

John Bentley hastened to Manchester to break the intelligence to his wife, whose grief at the sad news proved all but fatal.

The most singular circumstance respecting the death of the wealthy cotton-spinner was that no will could be found, nor any proof that he had ever made one. His son-in-law became, in consequence, undisturbed master of the old man's fortune.

True, his reputation was tarnished—worse, stained; but the dream of his life was accomplished—he was rich.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

A BEAUTIFUL FIGURE.

Life is beautifully compared to a fountain fed by a thousand streams, that perish if one be dried. It is a silver cord, twisted with a thousand strings, that part asunder if one be broken. Frail and thoughtless mortals are surrounded by innumerable dangers, which make it much more strange that they escape so long, than that they almost all perish suddenly at last. We are encompassed with accidents every day to crush the mouldering tenements we inhabit. The seeds of disease are planted in our constitutions by nature. The earth and atmosphere whence we draw the breath of life are impregnated with death; health is made to operate its own destruction; the food that nourishes containing the elements of decay; the soul that animates it, by vivifying first, tends to wear it out by its own action; death lurks in ambush along the paths. Notwithstanding this is the truth so palpably confirmed by the daily example before our eyes, how little do we lay it at heart! We see our friends and neighbors die among us, but how seldom does it occur to our thoughts that our knell shall perhaps give the next fruitless warning to the world!

* * *

FORBEARANCE.—It is not so great matter to live lovingly with good-natured, humble and meek persons; but he that can do so with the immoral, the wilful and ignorant, the peevish and perverse, he only hath true charity; always remembering that solid, true peace of God, consists rather in being complied with; in suffering and forbearing, rather than in contention and victory.

REPLY

TO THE SONG OF THE SPRING FLOWERS.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

I.

Gentle ones, a tender welcome
From the bond of Winter's tomb!
Hail unto your silver voices!
Hail unto your golden bloom!
Hail to you as smiles of Nature;
Hail as prophecies that we
Shall not always in the cerements
Of the dark Death-Tyrant be!

II.

Joy, O, joy! how many hours
In the woodland we will list
To your low, soft, meaning music,
By the South-Wind's minstrel kissed;
Kissed with holy, gentle rapture,
Wooed into a guileless song
Such as only to the purest,
The unselfish, can belong!

III.

Sing, O, sing, ye sacred creatures!
Sing, O, sing of love, sweet love!
Charm unto your golden bosoms
Starry beauty from above;
Bind the glad Earth unto Heaven;
Whisper in your clearest rhyme
Of the death of Life's dark battle
And the cloudless after-time!

IV.

Now, we hear you! O, what measures
Full of mercy, peace and love!
What a trembling in your bosoms
With the beauty from above!
Earth, despite of all thy darkness,
Pallid shrouds and burial wo,
In these flowers there is witness
That some Eden 's still below!

FOREST ADVENTURES.---No. 8.

BY COL. WALTER B. DUNLAP

THE OLD GUIDE'S STORY.

An approximation to Bolus's idiom would be impossible. He had learned to speak English, French, Dutch, and Portuguese; and his use of words was peculiar. There was no music in his voice, but there was a certain grandeur in his tones, when he was in earnest, that enhanced the interest of his narrative.

"I remember, ten years ago, or thereabouts," he commenced, "that I encamped by a lake very much like the one now before us; but it was not in this part of the country. It was away to the eastward, near the Caffraria Mountains. I had been engaged by a party of Portuguese to guide them from the coast up into the country towards the homes of the Bechuanas, where a Catholic mission had been established. There were in the party two priests, called Father Anselmo and Father Ambrose, and four merchants. I told them that they were going to travel a dangerous road, for the Caffres had been at war with the English, and had a deadly hatred of all white men. But the two priests were not to be put off. They said they were at work for a Heavenly Master, and their work must be done. As for the merchants, I could understand them easily. They were going with the missionaries in the hope of making large sums of money. The priests were really the leaders of the expedition; but one of the merchants, a large, powerful man, called Don Gomez, assumed control of affairs. They had six Hottentot servants when we started; but before we had had travelled a week four of these Hottentots deserted. However, the priests willingly cooked for the party, and the run-away servants were not much missed.

"In twenty days we had crossed the mountains, to the great basin where the water commences to flow *to the west; and on the afternoon* of the twenty-first day we encamped in a place very much like this. As yet we had met with no trouble, and the merchants laughed when I spoke of the Caffres. I told them if the Caffres did not come they might laugh in welcome; and, too, they might laugh if they could, if the Caffres did come. I knew that the men of the Caffre land were mad and blood-thirsty. The English had made war upon them, and they were ready to take vengeance upon all white men. And one thing more I told the Portuguese:—The Caffre warriors were not children. They were strong and powerful, and knew how to use their strength.

"It was almost sundown when our camp was fixed by the side of the lake; and while the two priests set about preparing supper, I helped take care of the oxen. We had no wagons, the goods being carried by the oxen in packs. As I led some of the animals down to the water to drink, I saw fresh foot-prints in the sand. They were large, strong prints, and I knew that Caffre men had made them. And this was not all that I discovered. I found a broken arrow, and a spot of fresh blood, with feathers scattered about upon the sand, as though a bird had been shot there. These marks could not have been made many hours. If Caffres had made them, then I did not believe the Caffres could be far away. I led my oxen back to the tether, and brought down some more to the water; and this time I ran my eye carefully over the shores of the lake. I had not been mistaken. Upon the opposite side I plainly saw men moving in the bushes. I made no sign, but pretended to be only busy in watering my oxen; yet I kept an eye upon the suspicious spot, and ere long saw a huge Caffre warrior, upon his hands and knees, looking earnestly towards our camp.

"As I walked back to the tether I thought the matter over, and was not long in coming to a conclusion. In the first place, there was a party of Caffres upon the opposite side of the lake; and the very fact that they kept themselves concealed was proof enough that they meant mischief. What was to be done? In the judgment of the merchants I had little confidence. Father Ambrose, the elder of the two priests, was the man to advise with. I drew him apart, as though I wanted him to look at the oxen, and when we were far enough away, I told him what I had seen. He was very thoughtful, but did not seem to be frightened; and I soon found that he knew as much of the Caffres as I did. He told me to wait while he went down to the water, and not to speak of the matter to any of the others. He went to his pack, and took out an old shirt, which he carried down to the water to wash. He worked away until he had removed as much dirt as he thought necessary, and then he came back, and joined me again.

"'You are right, Bolus,' he said to me. 'There are Caffre men hidden beyond the lake, and I have seen some of them. They are warriors, and are of a savage, bloodthirsty tribe; and I know that they mean to attack us. How can we escape them?'

"I shook my head.

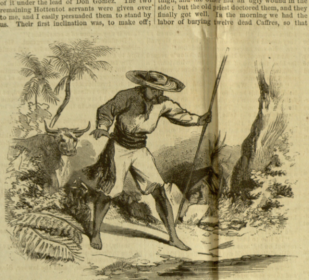
"'There can be no use in fleeing,' he continued, 'for they would surely overtake us. We might, possibly, save ourselves by leaving all our property behind; but we must not do that.' And then he asked me what I thought.

"I told him that we had got to meet the Caffres at some time, and I thought we had better do it now, while we had warning of their coming. He thought the same.

"'There cannot be many of them,' he said, 'or they would have attacked us ere this. They mean to set upon us by night.'

"Of course this seemed reasonable, though I had not thought of it before. After consulting a while longer Father Anselmo was called in. He trembled when he heard the news, but said he was ready to do his part. He said he was going to do the Lord's work, and if any of the servants of the devil arose to cut him off, he must overcome them if he could, even though he had to take their lives. Father Ambrose nodded his head, as much as to say that he felt the same.

"The four merchants were anxious for their supper, and called upon the priests to hurry up. The cloth was spread by the side of some bushes, and while the others were eating, Father Ambrose directed me to see that every piece of fire-arms was carefully loaded. We had arms enough—as many as we could possibly use—and when I had seen that they were all ready, I went back to the eating cloth, where I found the old priest just explaining to the merchants what had been discovered. At first three of them were for instant flight, but Don Gomez soon put that idea out of their heads. However, they were not cowards,—if they had been, they would never have ventured into that country; and it was finally arranged that we would make a bold fight of it under the lead of Don Gomez. The two remaining Hottentot servants were given over to me, and I easily persuaded them to stand by us. Their first inclination was, to make off; but when I intimated to them that they would get a bullet in the back if they turned to leave us, they concluded to remain.



"As soon as we had eaten supper we moved our packs all out into an open space; and when it was fairly dark we threw our blankets down upon the ground, close by them. After this we took our station behind a clump of bushes, where we had planned to wait for the Caffres. We had two rifles each, and four of those, in the hands of the merchants, were double-barrelled. We also had pistols and swords. The two servants, in addition to their rifles, had long boar-spears, which they could use with much dexterity.

"*We had not to wait a great while for the coming of the Caffres.* Within half an hour after we had taken our stations we could see dark objects moving upon the shore of the lake. There was a very small moon, just hanging above the tops of the trees, and it gave light enough to help us very much. Had the enemy waited half an hour longer, they would have gained an advantage by it; but they probably thought they had us surely enough, and wanted the light to help them. In a little while they were lost to our sight behind the trees between us and the end of the lake, and when we saw them again they were within a hundred yards of us, with nothing but open ground between us. There were eighteen of the Caffres—all of them stout, powerful warriors—armed with clubs and spears. They stopped a few seconds when they came in sight of our camp, and Don Gomez had just turned to speak with me, when they sent forth a huge shout, like the roar of bull buffaloes, and dashed towards the spot where our packs were piled up.

"The thicket in which we were posted was upon one side of the opening, and about twenty yards from the packs. As the shout of the Caffres broke upon the air, Don Gomez gave the word for us to fire. We poured in a well-directed volley upon the marauders, and they stopped in their headlong course, and their war-shouts were changed to yells and groans of surprise and pain. Before they could fairly make up their minds upon this unexpected turn of affairs, we had aimed our second lot of rifles, and another volley was fired. I saw, when the smoke lifted the first time, that some of the Caffres had fallen; and I knew that this second discharge must have taken down more of them. The merchants, who had the double-barreled rifles, fired four shots at random, for the smoke from our second discharge lay thickly upon the earth for some time, entirely shutting out our enemy.

"From what I knew of the Caffre character I supposed that the rascals would draw off at this second fire; but in this I was mistaken. While yet the smoke lay like a dense cloud between us, one of them, who was probably their chief, sent forth a terrific shout, which was answered by a number of others, and in a moment more as many as a dozen of them came rushing through the smoke, with their spears aimed directly towards us. They had discovered our cover, and were bound to make an assault.

"They were not Bechuanas nor Bushmen that we had to deal with then. They were as brave and resolute as any people of Africa, and they had been schooled in war for years.

"It was fortunate for us that Don Gomez was cooler and braver than I had taken him to be. When he saw this movement of the Caffres, he leaped to his feet, and ordered us to follow him. He told us to leave our empty rifles, and take our pistols. As he spoke he sprang backward from the thicket, and ran around so as to come up on the enemy's flank. His three companions followed him closely, while the two priests and myself brought up the rear, pushing the two servants ahead of us. The Caffres were charging upon the bushes, thrusting their spears into the cover, when we came out upon their side; and before they could fairly turn we had discharged our first battery of pistols, holding another battery still in reserve. The Don ordered us to keep the other pistols till we should come to close quarters.

"This new fire seemed to startle the Caffres, and they hesitated as they turned towards us. Don Gomez saw his advantage, and with a loaded pistol in one hand, and a sword in the other, he gave the order to charge, and dashed forward. I don't know but that those Portuguese merchants yelled as loud as the savages did. At any rate, they sent forth a terrific war-cry as they dashed to the charge, and I could not help joining them. In fact, I felt a strange impulse of utter fearlessness at that moment. I yelled with all my might, and when I discharged my pistol, I had the satisfaction of knowing that I had subtracted one from the number of our enemies. And that was the last fighting I had to do on that occasion.

"I thought I had seen smart warriors before; but I had never seen anything to equal the manner in which Don Gomez used his sword. I had thought him to be the most quiet and mild of the party; but now I saw him a perfect lion. Three spears were aimed at him as he advanced, and he cut them in twain as though they had been reeds of grass. And with his own sword he cut down three of the Caffres in quick succession. And Father Ambrose was not a coward. I saw him hew down two of the enemy, and when he had done it, I heard him muttering a prayer.

"Four of the Caffres lived to run away before our eyes. Don Gomez started to give chase; but they plunged into the lake, and he let them go. By a strange mercy none of our party was killed, though two of the merchants were wounded. One of them got a spear-cut in the thigh, and the other had an ugly wound in the side; but the old priest doctored them, and they finally got well. In the morning we had the labor of burying twelve dead Caffres, so that there must have been six escaped; for I know that I counted eighteen of them at first. However, we went on our way without further molestation, and Don Gomez made me a present of a fine rifle in consideration of the danger I had incurred on account of himself and friends."

After Bolus had concluded his story, we put away our pipes, and prepared for bed. As I was fixing the tether of my horse, my boy Dan came up by my side, and asked me if I believed what the old guide had been telling. I told him I thought it might be so.

"I know it is so," replied Dan, emphatically.

I asked him what he meant.

And he then informed me that he had heard the story before. His father's brother was one of the Caffres who escaped on the occasion of which Bolus had told; and he had heard him tell the story almost exactly as it had just been related, save that the Caffre narrator had set the number of Portuguese warriors at a full score or more.

"You need not tell Bolus anything of this," said Dan.

I promised to keep the boy's secret; and as I moved back towards the wagons the shades of a host of Caffre warriors seemed starting from the bushes on every hand, and I almost fancied that they whispered to me of other dangers in those vast solitudes than such as came from the beasts of prey.

GENTILITY.

The other day, in running my eye over a daily paper, I read this advertisement: "A *genteel* girl wishes a situation as chambermaid." Now, if there is one word in the English language that I hate more than another, it is the word *genteel*. No matter where or how, or to whom, or by whom it is applied, my very soul sickens at it. It is the universal and never-failing endorser of every sham ever hoisted upon disgusted human nature. From the "genteel" cabbage-scented boarding-house, where tobacco-emasculated young men "feed" and mindless, be-flounced, cheap jewel-ried married and unmarried women smile sweetly on them, to the seventh-rate dry-goods store in some obscure street, whose clerk sells only the most "genteel" goods at a shilling per yard; to the "genteel" school-girl who, owning one greasy silk dress, imagines that she understands her geography better in that attire than in a quiet, clean, modest "de laine;" to the "genteel" shop-girl who, pitiably destitute of comfortable underclothes, yet always owns a "dress hat," and swings about the last showy fashion in trimming, on some cheap fabric; to the "genteel" cook who goes to market with her hair dressed as near as may be like her mistress, fastening it up with a brassy imitation of her gold comb; to the "genteel" seminary for young ladies, who ride to school in a carriage with liveried servants, their papa having formerly been one himself.

But a "genteel" chambermaid! Now, why should this patrician creature seek such a prosaic, vulgar occupation? Could she be aware that chambermaids must wield brooms, and dust-pans, and scrubbing-brushes, and handle pokers, and shovel, and tongs, and ashes. That they may even be asked to stand at the wash-tub, and be seen by the neighbors in the disgraceful occupation of hanging out clothes. That they may occasionally have to answer the door-bell in an apron, and usher finely-dressed ladies into the parlor; or be asked to take a baby out for an airing, and be stamped at once by the public as a person who "works for a living." How can a "genteel" chambermaid calmly contemplate such degradation, least of all perform such duties faithfully and well. Would not any sensible lady, wishing a chambermaid, see at once that the thing was impossible? Would she not know that she might ring her bell till the wire gave out, before this "genteel" young woman would think it expedient to answer it till she was ready. And when she sent her up stairs to tidy her chamber, would she not be sure that this "genteel" creature would probably spend the time in trying on her mistress' last new opera-hat before the toilet-glass. And if she sent her out on an errand, involving even a moderately sized bundle, would not this "genteel" young woman probably take a circuitous route through back streets to hide her ignominy.

Heavens! what a relief it is to see people self-poised and satisfied with their honest occupations, making no attempt to veneer them over with a thin polish of gentility. Such I am happy to say there still are, in humble circumstances, notwithstanding the bad example constantly set them by the moneyed class in our country, who are servilely and snobbishly bent on aping all the aristocratic absurdities of the old country. "*Genteel!*" Faugh! even the slang word "FUST-rate" is music to my ears after it.

FANNY FERN.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

INQUIRER puts the following case:—"A friend of mine took a check for $213 to a bank and got the money on it. On counting it over, he made it $233, and supposed that the bank had given him $20 too much. He made up his mind not to take the overplus back to the bank, but to keep it. But, on counting the money over again, he found to his surprise and chagrin that there was but $213 after all. We—that is my friend, myself and several others—counted the money over and over until we all became satisfied that there was but $213, and so at last settled down on that. Now, the point raised is this: Was it just as bad, morally speaking, that my friend determined to keep the $20 overplus, when he thought that the bank had actually given him that sum too much, as it would have been for him to have kept it in case the bank had actually given it to him. That is the question; and we want to know what the LEDGER has to say about it." We answer the question in the affirmative. Your friend, morally speaking, was guilty of appropriating $20 that did not belong to him; and it certainly was not owing to any spirit of fairness or honesty on his part that he did not actually carry out his intention.

ITALIA.—It has been judicially determined that a priest or clergyman, of any sect or denomination, is not bound to expose a communication that has been made to him by a penitent, or a confessing member of his church. The same rule applies to matters told to one's physician or lawyer. All such communications are what are called *privileged*, and cannot be inquired into on a trial at law. The reason of this is, that more harm would come to individuals and to the public from allowing such sacred and indispensable confidences to be ripped up and exposed, than all the good which would result from such exposure could counterbalance. It is on the same ground or theory, that a husband or wife is not allowed to be a witness for or against one another; the courts holding that no advantage could be obtained by allowing them to be witnesses for or against each other which would compensate for the destruction of that intimate, domestic and sacred confidence which should always subsist between husband and wife.

X. Y. Z.—We do not care to discuss at length the murder and capital punishment questions. We must say, however, that to us there is something strange in recommending a deliberate murderer to mercy, or giving a verdict of manslaughter against a man who kills a woman in a furious passion. There seems to be a tendency in the age to save the murderer even from the fate of his victim. But they can never let him loose on society again. He must be a perpetual convict. No doubt, however, they will feed him well, and he will find sympathizers to describe with pathos his hard treatment, and implore public favor for the increase and multiplication of his comforts. It reminds us of the Banian who paid two hundred rupees for the liberation of a flea from between the finger and thumb of its savage captor. Whatever contributes most to the diminution of the crime is best. It is not the murderer, but society, that must be thought of. The murderer is an outcast.

FLORENCE is puzzled to understand how, with the ability to appreciate and enjoy the conversation of intellectual society, she yet feels incompetent to join in it, or to impart her knowledge to children. Perhaps FLORENCE is too humble-minded, her bump of self-esteem has not sufficiently developed; or she may be proud, and for fear she should not shine like a star, she will not put forth any light. But for her comfort, we will tell FLORENCE that the cleverest people are by no means the best talkers—generally the reverse. A profound thinker, and one who sifts a subject to the bottom, is very often taken for a dunderhead by those who skim, swallow like, over the surface of things. To convey instruction to the youthful intellect in an easy, effectual manner, requires a peculiarly constituted mind, composed of love, sympathy, patience, and perseverance, backed by unlimited good temper. It is a talent which very few possess.

C. E. B.—You can never convince any civilized community that a son would be justified in striking his mother, no matter what circumstances you may adduce in extenuation of the unnatural and heinous brutality. In the case which you describe, there certainly was not the slightest vestige of an excuse for the dastardly act. It certainly was an outrage for the mother to beat her son's child so severely; but he could have taken the child away from the reach of her arm; or he could have gently restrained her; or he could have done many other things, any of which would have been infinitely preferable to the striking of his mother. It is, of course, advisable for the families to live separate and apart hereafter. It is evident that they are totally unfitted for living under the same roof together.

AGATHA.—It is correct to say, "John is the *best* writer," when you are speaking of only two persons. "John is the *better* writer," is an awkward, stiff and incorrect phrase. In fact, it is a vulgar error. The *comparative* degree is *indefinite*, and does not well agree with the *definite* article; but the superlative degree is definite. We say "John is *a better* writer than James;" but when we come to the definite article, we use the superlative degree, and say "John is *the best* writer." Would you ask, "Who writes *the better* hand, John or you?" Of course not. But you would say, "John writes *a better* hand than you." We know that some writers of good repute make this mistake, and that it often occurs in the newspapers; but that does not help to make it right.

S. W. wants grammatical information in regard to the following question. In the sentence, "He possessed what is regarded as the first requisite of a good soldier, ability to command," he wants to know what the *object* of "possessed" is, and whether "requisite" is in the nominative or objective case, and if in the objective, then what it is the object of. These problems are easy enough of solution, and it seems to us that almost anybody might give "S. W." the information he asks; but as there seems to have been considerable discussion of the subject, we will leave it as an exercise in parsing for some of our young readers, and will publish the best analysis of the sentence and explanation of its grammatical construction and relations, that may be sent to us.

SYBIL.—If you are so very young, you must not be too hasty in coming to conclusions. There is such a thing as calf-love. Young gentlemen show themselves very tender to young ladies when they find them alone, but before parents they are as meek as Moses, and affect indifference. If you are wise, you will not make much account of such love. It is not yet ripe for the altar. Some young ladies are in such a hurry for the "declaration." When once a gentleman has positively spoken love to a young lady, she is entitled to speak to her parents, but not when he merely looks love and pays attentions. It is the tongue or the pen that commits a man, not the eyes.

E. W.—You should avoid all such wild speculations as that which you mention. No matter how rich you are, your wealth would soon melt away under the operations of a gang of Wall-street sharpers. A tontine is an annuity system, upon the principle of dividing all the interest among the survivors, so that the last becomes sole proprietor of principal and interest. It was invented by, and takes its name from, an Italian of the name of Tonti, and was much in vogue at one time. It is simply an agreeable species of lottery, for you are sure to win—if you live.

SAMANTHA.—It will not "hurt" you to study algebra and geometry; still, there are many things which it would be better for a girl to exercise her intellect and spend her time upon. Your parents and your teachers must decide the question, as they know your qualities of mind, your social position, your pecuniary condition, and all those other matters which enter into the problem.

J. M. T.—Read the Bible as your chief book. Study it, too, until you catch its divine spirit and understand its illuminating truths. You should also read the history of the United States, and the lives of all our great men, especially those of Washington and Jackson. The only way you can improve your penmanship, is to write a great deal and take pains.

DISTRESS.—The young lady at present evidently cares more for her new-made acquaintance than for you. It may be a mere hallucination which will pass off, or it may be the beginning of a lasting affection. You would do well to prepare for a disappointment, and then you will not be disappointed—at least not so bitterly as you otherwise might be.

SARAH.—As you do not give us the entire sentence, we cannot say whether you should have said "you and me," or "you and I." Each phrase is correct or incorrect according to its use. "You and *I* sent for him," would be correct; and so would "he sent for you and *me*." *You* being both nominative and objective, does not change.

JENNIE AND EMMA.—Treat your visitor with politeness, but show him no cordiality.

YONKERS inquires if it be etiquette for a widow to wear the wedding ring given by her first husband along with that which she receives when she becomes a second time a wife. We do not know that there is any *etiquette* in the matter, but we believe the usual practice is, for the widow to remove her ring before she presents herself at the altar a second time. And what says common sense? The ring is the symbol of the faith she receives and pledges when she consents to be "given away;" it is a *link* in the chain by which she binds herself to one man alone; but as the contract is made null by death, to retain the ring afterwards is both useless and inconsistent, particularly when she enters into a second contract. Some maintain the ring should be removed when the weeds are assumed, though such a custom would, we believe, be anything but pleasant. The wedding ring challenges the respect awarded to the matronly state; to compel a widow to resign it would be at once wresting from her all the dignity that matrimony had conferred; besides, if she have any living pledges, the wedding ring is her sanction. Second husbands, however, may stand excused for wishing to remove all traces of a former connexion, seeing that ladies are apt to taunt a second love with the good qualities of their first. A poor man, who had been fascinated into matrimony with a widow, was so annoyed and twitted with the perfections of his predecessor, that he at last declared if Heaven should ever indulge him with the power of making another choice, he would take care not to choose a widow, unless her first husband had been hanged, when she would of course take good care not to talk about him.

CORNS.—You cannot stretch a tight boot so that it will afford a permanent relief to your corns. The stretching of leather is a favorite theory of the shoemaker, wherewith he comforts his customers, and promotes the cultivation of corns and bunions. Never believe it; never trust to the *tree* as they call the stretcher. You may as well trust to the stretching of an India rubber elastic, which will stop the circulation of your blood for ever, before it give way even one quarter of an inch, which it will not recover when the force is removed. When your boot is too tight, you get it put on the tree, and it feels much easier when you try it on again. Away you walk, quite relieved and overjoyed; but in a few hours you are as miserable as ever. Perhaps your foot has swelled, says the bootmaker, put the boot on the tree all night. You have it put on the tree all night, and it comes home comfortable again; but the comfort is of short duration, and you find, to your sorrow, that though leather will stretch if you force it, it will unstretch also when the force is withdrawn. It is better to trust to the unstretching of leather. The shoemakers understand this too. Therefore, when the shoe is too large, they say it will close upon the foot, the leather will contract. They are right, it does contract, more surely than it stretches, and much more comfortably to the poor feet which it encases.

C. P.—The early history of the Isle of Man is lost in obscurity. It was governed by the kings of Norway till about 1270, when it was conquered by Alexander III., of Scotland. The English soon afterwards drove out the Scots, who subsequently recovered it under Robert Bruce, and possessed it till 1340, when it again reverted to the English, under whom it has since remained. It was held of the English crown successively by the Earls of Wiltshire, Northumberland, and Derby, and the Duke of Athol, which last nobleman, by an arrangement with the English government, made over to them all the sovereign rights and privileges of the island. Douglas is the name of the chief town, and the whole island may have been held of the crown of Scotland by the Black or Red Douglasses, in the same manner as it was held of the kings of England by the before-mentioned nobles, but we are not aware that this was the case. The name of the town was formerly written Dufglass, and it is supposed to be derived from the two rivers, Doo and Glass. We do not know whether a residence there would contribute to your restoration to health or not. You should consult some skilful physician on that subject.

A YOUNG CLERGYMAN, who is nervous and timid, is yet professionally obliged to face an audience whom he addresses with fear and trembling. Can medicine do anything for him? he asks. We believe not. The celebrated Robert Hall, whose talent for extempore speaking was such that, when eleven years of age, he was set up to preach extempore to a select auditory of full grown men, says of himself, "To me to speak slow was ruin. You know, sir, that force or momentum, is conjointly as the body and the velocity; therefore, as my voice is feeble, what is wanted in body must be made up in velocity." Nervous speakers often begin to speak with great trepidation, and gain courage as they proceed. If they linger on the way, they are apt to wander and think of danger; but by urging themselves on to a rapid course, they become bold and fearless. We think medical stimulants are in general disapproved of by speakers; but the diversity of character and constitution is such, that every man's case seems to be a special and idiosyncratic one. You must strike out boldly, and keep at it until you acquire confidence.

AN INTERESTED YOUNG MAN puts the following case: "A gentleman pays his addresses to a young lady, and afterwards falls deeply in love with her sister, whom he prefers to the former. How should he act?" It is a dilemma. Courtship is not marriage, neither is it engagement. The object of courtship is to form a tender acquaintanceship, to make a discovery reciprocally of tempers, talents and manners. It does not necessarily lead to marriage. But then, would a respectable family be reconciled to the idea of a gentleman forsaking one sister to take up with another? Most probably not. It is a bad look out, as the sailors say, and forbodes mischief. We should not like to intermeddle, lest we get our face scratched.

RHOBE.—The best thing a young woman can do is to behave herself discreetly; show a good spirit, in speaking of others; conceal all petty, envious, and jealous feelings, and gradually, but surely, will she establish for herself a good name. It can never do her any harm, and it may prove a fortune to her. Scheming is a dangerous thing, and a reputation for it is generally fatal. You would do well to cease all correspondence with young gentlemen. It can do you no good, and might lead to unpleasant results.

RASH.—You have taken a very appropriate signature. You seem to be "rash" in all your actions. You ought to apologize to your mother and should strive to make all the amends in your power for your undutiful conduct. When a man comes to stand by his mother's grave, happy is he if there be no remembrance of duties unfulfilled, or of atonements which should have been made, left still unperformed. Do not let a day pass before seeking your mother's forgiveness.

LIEUTENANT.—Your commanding officer does quite right in suppressing duelling "with an iron hand," as you say he does. Besides, if he did not do it, he would probably be himself suppressed, as neither the government, nor the people of the loyal portion of the Union, will tolerate such a barbarous practice either in the army or out of it.

ELEONORE.—It would, of course, be unwise for a woman to *under*value beauty; but it would be absolutely foolish for her to *over*value it. Among those men whose love and esteem are best worth having, talent mellowed and adorned by downright goodness of heart and sweetness of disposition can always win against mere physical beauty.

A. O. S.—There is no *obligation* resting upon a man to get up in a car or omnibus and give a lady a seat. It is a mere matter of politeness and kindness of heart, and is to be regulated by judgment and all the circumstances of each particular case.

R. G.—So long as you continue to be a bachelor, you must expect to be lightly esteemed by the ladies. A *confirmed* bachelor is never of any account with them. Show signs of courtship and marriage, and you will soon see a difference.

D. S.—If your friend is "incapable of drawing a logical conclusion," as you declare that he is, why do you trouble yourself to argue with him. Either you do not believe your own assertion, or else you are yourself rather deficient in logical powers.

HERO.—Your serving in the army of the United States will not make you a citizen. There is only one way in which a foreigner can become a citizen of this republic, and that is by becoming naturalized according to law.

POMPEY.—There is nothing improper in a nice, gentle laugh, on a proper occasion; but even such a laugh would not be proper at a funeral. Frequent laughter, especially if it be rude and boisterous, is improper and a nuisance; and so is a perpetual, silly simper.

H. M.—We suppose you might with propriety write "John Jones, Jr., Esq.," or "John Jones, Esq., Jr." In either case the "Esq." would be rather an awkward appendage. The first method strikes us as being the least awkward of the two, but others may think differently.

CYNTHIA.—If the recreant lover cannot be made to see his duty, why then the probability is that he will not *perform* his duty. The only way is, to persist in your ministrations until you succeed in enlightening him.

J. L. C., Company B, 10th Con. Volunteers, says, in response to an inquiry made by a "Lady" in a recent number of the LEDGER as to the whereabouts of that regiment, that it is at St. Helena Island, Port Royal, S.C.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*